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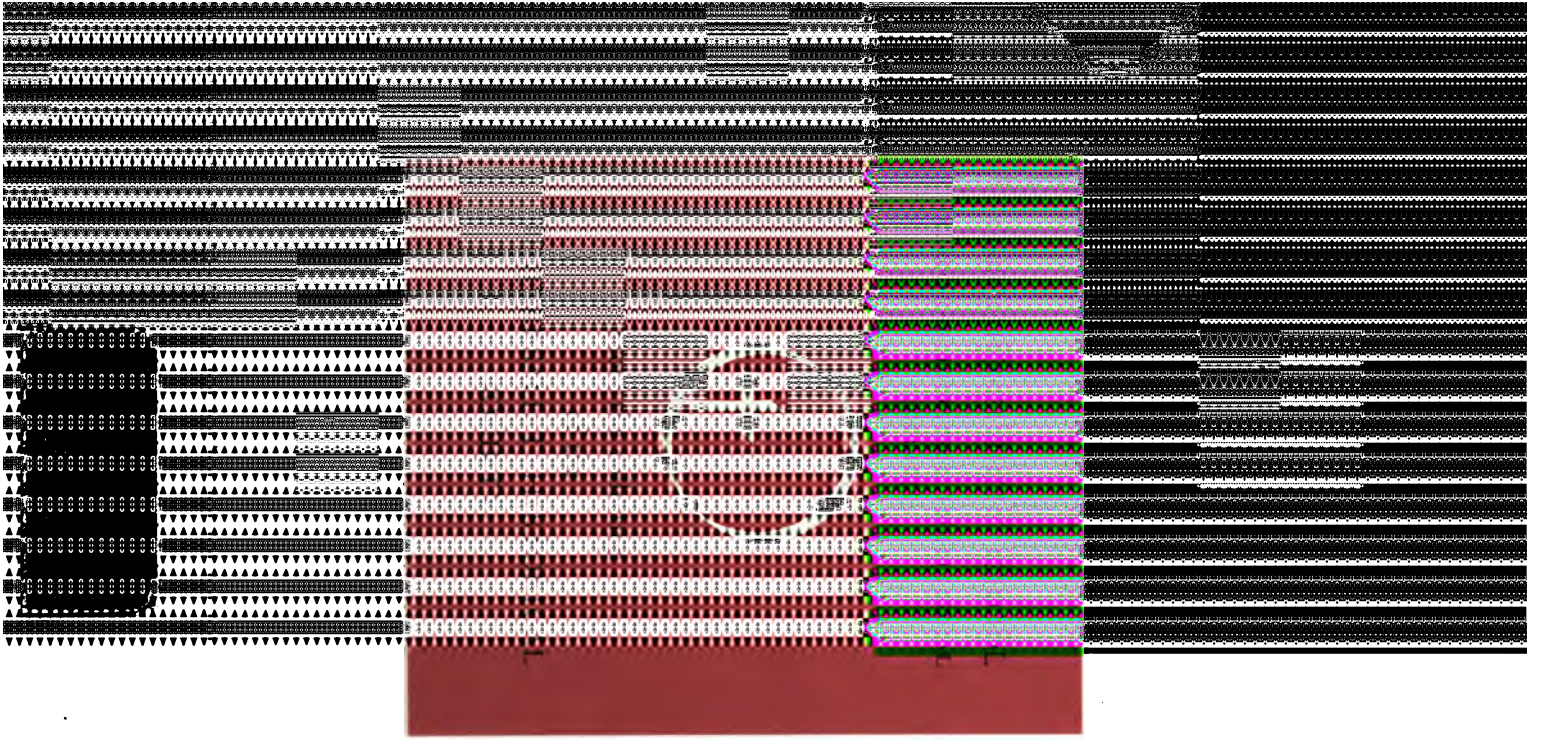

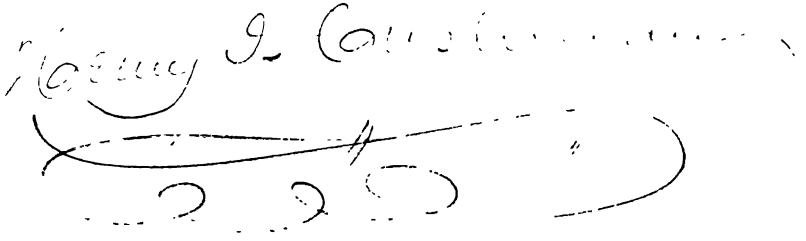

R. Cushman.

UNIVERSALISM ASSERTED

On the Authority of

Reason, the Fathers, & Holy Scripture.

BY THE

REV. THOMAS ALLIN.

"A threefold cord is not quickly broken."—*Eccles.* iv. 12.

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PREFACE.

The following pages state the objections to the traditional creed (and no less to every modification of it that teaches endless sin, as the doom of even a single soul) on grounds of Morality, History, and Holy Scripture.

Here it is enough to say that by representing evil as eternal, the traditional creed teaches a (virtual) dualism; and proclaims (so far) a defeated God and a baffled Saviour. It further degrades God below the level of human nature by assigning to the Creator (who is therefore the Father) of all, acts of which no human parent would be guilty. Because this is felt to be indeed so, there are on every side thousands (nay, tens of thousands) who, in their inmost convictions are, in fact, universalists, even though they may disavow the name. Further, the larger hope is not alone consistent with, but in fact it is based on the fullest sense of the guilt of sin: because sin is so evil a thing, we dare not teach that God can permit it to go on for ever. Nor does the fullest conviction of the Divine Love and Fatherhood, as supreme, imply the absence of retribution. The very reverse is the case, for true love is most awful, most inexorable, while most tender. Nay, universalism is not even necessarily opposed to perpetual penalty; for a *pœna damni*, a loss of the highest blessedness, may, in perfect conformity with its teachings, be incurred by wilful persistence in sin and long-delayed repentance.

Further, I have tried to shew, by very ample evidence, that the larger hope was widely taught during the first

five centuries; and taught as in perfect harmony with the Catholic Faith; and that it has never been condemned by the Catholic Church.

Lastly, we appeal with confidence to Holy Scripture. Few things seem to us more opposed at once to the letter and the spirit of the Bible than the idea that in it God is recounting the story of His own defeat. Holy Scripture is all through the story of a restoration of the human race—not attempted vainly by the Creator, as the popular creed teaches—but actually carried to completion by Jesus Christ, who finally reconciles to God all things, whatsoever and wheresoever they be.

ADDITIONS, CORRECTIONS, &c.

As to Didymus.—I should like to add that he seems to teach the liberation from Hades of every soul by Christ, for he says that Christ "descends to Hades in order to bring back the souls, there detained *on account of their sins.*"—*In Ps.* lxx. But if the guilty are set free, certainly the righteous are liberated. The reference in the third passage quoted (p. 52), should be to *Cont. Manich. ch. 2*, and not to *S. Matt.* ii. The passage quoted from *Ps.* vii. 6, should be rendered, "So their iniquity shall have an end." In the quotation preceding it, the reference has been omitted—it is to *Ps.* x. Didymus is earnest in teaching that the destruction of God's enemies is practically their conversion. Thus, when it is said that God burns up his enemies (*Ps.* xcvii. 3), Didymus explains this of the removal of their sins. And so again on *Ps.* lvii. the melting away of God's enemies is explained by him of life absorbing death. On *Ps.* xviii. 42, where God is said to beat His enemies "small as the dust before the wind," Didymus explains this of their conversion. And, he says, God "destroys liars, *so far as they are liars.*"—*In Ps.* v. In the quotations from Cyril, the passage quoted from *In Ps.* cvi., should be *In Jno.* v. i., and in *Hom. Pasch.* ii. should be *Hom. Pasch* v., and it seems fair to say that Cyril, perhaps, teaches that there is a fracture beyond cure: but it is certain that he says Christ breaks up in order to reform. A correction, in no way affecting the character of his teaching, is, I find, needed in the extracts from Titus of Bostra—p. 40. The third quoted passage should be expunged, as should the "xxii" that closes the extracts, and the last but one would be better translated—Whatever results from war (he is speaking

of death) is just and right, and not merely when "coming from war, but in every mode universally it has been shewn, by what I have said before, to be not merely not evil, but good naturally." Further, it is certainly a fact needing explanation that Dr. PUSEY has *passed over* this Father's genuine works, and quotes, to prove his acceptance of the traditional creed, from a book which is only a patchwork, or mosaic, of extracts from TITUS and OTHERS. I may, perhaps, add that a few critics dispute the authenticity of the commentary on Isaiah assigned to S. BASIL (p. 45), but, I believe, on insufficient grounds. It may be added that I do not claim as Universalists every Father from whom I have quoted.

On page 18, for "Salencia," read "Seleucia:" on page 23, for *In laud S. Mariæ*, read *In Dom. pass.*: on page 24, after "non-existence," insert *Cont. Sec.* i. 15.

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of death) is just and right, and not merely when "coming from war, but in every mode universally it has been shewn, by what I have said before, to be not merely not evil, but good naturally." Further, it is certainly a fact needing explanation that Dr. PUSEY has *passed over* this Father's genuine works, and quotes, to prove his acceptance of the traditional creed, from a book which is [redacted] and

CHAPTER I.

THE QUESTION STATED.

"Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?"—GEN. xviii. 25.

> What am I but the creature Thou hast made?
> What have I but the blessings Thou has lent?
> What hope I but Thy mercy and Thy love? * *
> Thou wilt not hold in scorn the child who dares
> Look up to Thee, the Father. * * * O. W. HOLMES.

1. The following pages are written under the pressure of a deep conviction that the views generally held, as to the future punishment of the ungodly, wholly fail to satisfy the plain statements of Holy Scripture. The popular creed has maintained itself on a Scriptural basis solely, I believe, by hardening into dogma mere figures of oriental imagery; by mistranslations and misconceptions of the sense of the original (to which our Authorised Version largely contributes); and finally, by completely ignoring a vast body of evidence in favour of the salvation of all men, furnished, as will be shewn, by very numerous passages of the New Testament, no less than by the great principles that pervade the teaching of all Revelation. Again, I write, because persuaded, that however loudly asserted

and widely held, the popular belief is at best a Tradition— is not an Article of Faith in the Catholic Church—is taught in no Creed—is accepted by no General Council, nay, is distinctly opposed to the views of not a few of the holiest and wisest Fathers of the Church in primitive times, who, in so teaching, expressed the belief of very many, if not the majority, of Christians in their days.

2. Further, I write, because deeply and painfully convinced of the very serious mischief which has been, and is being produced by the views generally held. They in fact tend, as nothing else ever has, to cause, I had almost said, to justify, the scepticism now so widely spread; they effect this because they so utterly conflict with any conception we can form of common justice and equity.

3. Therefore of mercy I shall say little in these pages: it is enough to appeal, when speaking of moral considerations, to that sense of Right and Wrong which is God's voice speaking within us. Indeed, among the many misconceptions with which all higher views of the Gospel are assailed, few are more unfounded than that which asserts that thus God's justice is forgotten in the prominence assigned to His mercy. This objection merely shews a complete misapprehension of the views here advocated. For these views do in fact appeal to, and by this appeal recognise, first of all, the justice of God.

It is precisely the sense of natural equity which GOD has planted within us, that the popular belief in endless torment most deeply wounds.

4. And these considerations are in fact a complete answer to some other objections often heard. "Why disturb men's minds," it is said, "why unsettle their faith; why not let well alone?" By all means, I reply, let well alone, but never let ill alone. Men's minds are already disturbed: it is because they are already disturbed that we would calm them, and would restore the doubters to faith, by pointing them to a larger hope, to a truer Christianity. A graver objection arises, but, like the former, wholly without foundation in fact. It is said, "By this larger hope you, in fact, either weaken or wholly remove all belief in future punishment. You explain away the guilt of sin." The very opposite is surely the truth, for you establish future punishment, and with it that sense of the reality of sin (to which conscience testifies) on a firm basis, only when you teach a plan of retribution, which is itself reasonable and credible. A penalty which to our reason and moral sense seems shocking, and monstrous, loses all force as a threat. It has ever been thus in the case of human punishments. And so in the case of Hell. Outwardly believed, it has ceased to touch the conscience, or greatly to influence the life of Christians. To the mass of men it has become a name and little more (not seldom a jest); to the sceptic it has furnished

the choicest of his weapons; to the man of science a mark for loathing and scorn: while, alas, to many a sad and drooping heart, which longs to follow Christ more closely, it is the chief woe and burden of life. But the conscience, when no longer wounded by extravagant dogmas, is most ready to acquiesce in any measure of retribution (how sharp soever it be) which yet does not shock the moral sense, and conflict with its deepest convictions. And so the larger hope most fully recognises at once the guilt of sin, and the need of fitting retribution: nay, it may be claimed for it, that it alone places both on a firm and solid basis, by bringing them into harmony with the verdict of reason, of conscience, and of Holy Scripture.

5. It is better now for clearness sake, to define that popular view of future punishment, of which I shall often speak. It is briefly this: That God will after death pass on the ungodly a sentence of endless pain, of endless torments; that from this suffering there is no hope of escape; that of this evil there is no possible alleviation. That when your imagination has called up a series of ages, in apparently endless succession, all these ages of sin and of agony, undergone by the lost, have diminished their cup of suffering by not so much as one single drop; their pain is then no nearer ending than before. Those who hold this terrible doctrine to be a part of the "glad tidings of great joy" to men from their Father in Heaven, differ indeed as to the

number of the finally lost: some make them to be a majority of mankind, some a minority. Now it may be gravely questioned whether there can be any doubt at all from their point of view on this head. For the texts on which they rely seem, to most minds, if they teach the popular creed at all, to teach, just as clearly, that the lost shall be the majority of men. "Many are called but *few* are chosen." "Fear not, *little* flock." "Narrow is the way that leadeth to life and *few* there be that find it." "With *most* of them, GOD was not well pleased." Indeed, it seems perfectly clear that the popular view requires us to believe in the final loss of the vast majority of our race. For it is only the truly converted in this life (as it asserts), who reach Heaven; and it is beyond all fair question, that of professing Christians only a small portion are truly converted; to say nothing of the myriads and myriads of those who have died in Paganism. But even waiving this point, the objections to the popular creed are in no way really lightened by our belief, as to the relative numbers of the lost and the saved. The real difficulty consists in the infliction of any such penalty, and not in the number who are doomed to it. Nor need we forget how inconceivably vast must be that number, on the most lenient hypothesis. Take the lowest estimate; and when you remember the innumerable myriads of our race who have passed away—those now living—and those yet unborn—it becomes clear that the number of the lost must be something in its vastness defying

all calculation ; and of these, all, be it remembered, children of the great Parent—all made in His image—all redeemed by the life blood of His dear Son ; and all shut up for ever and ever (words, of whose awful meaning no man has, or can have, the very faintest conception) in blackness of darkness, in despair, and in the company of devils.

6. Let me next shew what this Hell of the popular creed really means, so far as human words can dimly convey its horrors, and for this purpose I subjoin the following extracts—"Little child, if you go to Hell there will be a devil at your side to strike you. He will *go on striking* you every minute *for ever and ever* without stopping. The first stroke will make your body as bad as the body of Job, covered, from head to foot, with sores and ulcers. The second stroke will make your body twice as bad as the body of Job. The third stroke will make your body three times as bad as the body of Job. The fourth stroke will make your body four times as bad as the body of Job. How, then, will your body be after the devil has been striking it every moment for a hundred million of years without stopping? Perhaps at this moment, seven o'clock in the evening, a child is just going into Hell. To-morrow evening, at seven o'clock, go and knock at the gates of Hell and ask what the child is doing. The devils will go and look. They will come back again and say, *the child is burning*. Go in a week and ask what the child is

doing; you will get the same answer, *it is burning.* Go in a year and ask, the same answer comes—*it is burning.* Go in a million of years and ask the same question, the answer is just the same—*it is burning.* So, if you go for ever and ever, you will always get the same answer—*it is burning in the fire.*"—*The Sight of Hell.* Rev. J. FURNISS, C.S.S.R. "Gather in one, in your mind, an assembly of all those men or women, from whom, whether in history or in fiction, your memory most shrinks, gather in mind all that is most loathsome, most revolting * * * conceive the fierce fiery eyes of hate, spite, frenzied rage, ever fixed on thee, looking thee through and through with hate * * * * hear those yells of blaspheming, concentrated hate, as they echo along the lurid vault of Hell; every one hating every one * * * Yet a fixedness in that state in which the hardened malignant sinner dies, involves, without any further retribution of GOD, this endless misery."—*Sermon* by the Rev. E. B PUSEY, D.D. "When thou diest thy soul will be tormented alone; that will be a Hell for it: but at the day of Judgment thy body will join thy soul, and then Thou wilt have twin Hells, thy soul sweating drops of blood, and thy body suffused with agony. In fire, exactly like that we have on earth, thy body will lie, asbestos like, for ever unconsumed, all thy veins roads for the feet of pain to travel on, every nerve a string, on which the Devil shall for ever play his diabolical tune of Hell's unutterable lament."—Sermon on the *Resurrection of the Dead,* by Rev.

C. H. SPURGEON. Awful as are these quotations, I must repeat that they give no adequate idea at all of the horrors of Hell; for that which is the very sting of its terrors—their unendingness—is beyond our power really to conceive, even approximately: so totally incommensurable are the ideas of time and of eternity.

7. But it will be said, we no longer believe in a material Hell—no longer teach a lake of real fire. I might well ask, on your theory of interpreting Scripture, what right have you so to teach? But let me rather welcome this change of creed, so far as it is a sign of an awakening moral sense. Yet this plea, in mitigation of the horror your doctrines inspire, cannot be admitted; for when you offer for acceptance a spiritual, rather than a material flame, who is there that cannot see that the real difficulty is the same, whether you suppose man's body burned or his spirit tortured? It may be even maintained, fairly, that a Hell which torments the higher part, is rather an aggravated than a mitigated penalty.

8. Merely to state this doctrine in any form, is to refute it for very many minds. So deeply does it wound what is best and holiest in us; indeed, as I shall try to show further on, it is, for all practical purposes, found incredible, even by those who honestly profess to believe it. This terrible difficulty, felt and acknowledged in all ages, has been largely met for the Roman Catholic, by the doctrine of Purgatory, which

became developed as the belief in endless torment gradually supplanted that earlier and better faith, which *alone* finds expression in the two really Catholic and Ancient Creeds, faith in *Everlasting Life.* How immense must have been the relief thus afforded, is evident, when we remember that the least sorrow, however imperfect, the very slightest desire for reconciliation with GOD, though deferred to the last moment of existence, was believed to free the dying sinner from the pains of Hell, no matter how aggravated his sins may have been. Among the Reformed Communions this difficulty was met, no doubt, by a silent incredulity—often unconscious—yet ever increasing, on the part of the great majority; indeed, some divines, have at all times, both in England and on the Continent, openly avowed their disbelief in endless torments. This growing incredulity has found, in our day, open expression, in a remarkable theory, that of conditional immortality (itself a revival of an earlier belief). This doctrine, briefly stated, teaches that man is naturally mortal, that only in Jesus Christ is immortality conferred on the righteous—that the ungodly shall be judged, and, after due punishment, annihilated.

9. Of this dogma I shall at once say, that, while it degrades man, it fails to vindicate God. "It is that most wretched and cowardly of all theories, which supposes the soul to be naturally mortal, and that God will resuscitate the wicked to torment them for a time, and then finally

extinguish them. I can see no ground for this view in Scripture but in mistaken interpretations, and it does not meet the real difficulty at all, for it supposes that evil has in such cases finally triumphed, and that God had no resource but to punish and extinguish it: which is essentially the very difficulty felt by the sceptical mind. I have called it cowardly, for it surrenders the true nobility of man, his natural immortality, in a panic at an objection, and like all cowardice, fails in securing safety."—*Donellan Lectures*, QUARRY. "I believe in one God the Father Almighty, who willeth not the death of a sinner." I.—If, then, even one sinner die finally, God's will is not done, *i.e.*, God is defeated and evil victorious. It is strange indeed that able men should overlook the fact, that all schemes of partial salvation involve a compromise with evil on God's part. II.—No less strange is the assertion that the moral sense is not shocked by GOD, who is absolutely free, yet forcing the gift of life on those whom he knows to be in fact destined to become the prey of evil so completely that they either rot away of sheer wickedness, or, being hopelessly corrupt, are extinguished by their Father. III.—Death nowhere in Holy Scripture implies annihilation, for in the case of the Old Testament, earthly destruction is all that the expressions, there relied on, really teach; and in the case of the New Testament, death and destruction have a far wider significance, and one far deeper. Nay, as I hope to point out, there is in New Testament

usage a deep spiritual connection between death and life; death becomes the path to, and the condition of, life. IV.—Further, this theory wholly breaks down in practice. Take, *e.g.*, the Antediluvians. After they had 'died' in their sins they were evangelised by Christ in person. Take the whole heathen world, they 'perish,' but are they all, on any possible theory, lost or annihilated? Hence the unanswerable dilemma, either all these are annihilated, or you must give up that sense of perishing on which the theory is based. V.—Probably I have said enough, but yet a very grave difficulty remains. This theory stands in hopeless conflict with the promises to restore all things, to reconcile all things through Christ, which abound in Scripture; nay, which form the very essence of its teaching when describing Christ's empire.

10. Another view adopted by a number, probably extremely large, and increasing, differs altogether from that last stated. Those who hold it have had their eyes opened to the fact, that the New Testament contains very many long neglected texts which teach the salvation of all men. They have also learned enough to have their faith gravely shaken in the popular interpretation of the texts usually quoted in proof of endless pain. The theory of conditional immortality fails to satisfy such men. They see that it is altogether unsuccessful in meeting the real difficulty of the popular creed, *i.e.*, the triumph of evil over good, of Satan over the

Saviour of man, and therefore over GOD. They perceive, too, the narrow and arbitrary basis on which it rests in appealing to Holy Scripture. And so they decline to entertain it as any solution of the question, and say, "We are not able to accept any theory definitely of the future of man, because we do not see that anything has been clearly revealed. Enough has been disclosed to shew to us that God is love, and we are content to believe that, happen what will, all will ultimately be shewn to be the result of love divine."

11. It is impossible to avoid sympathy with much of this view at first sight, but only then; for when closely examined it is seen to be open to the charge of grave ambiguity or far worse. It may mean that in the future GOD will act as a loving human parent would, and then, I reply, this is precisely the larger hope. Again, it may mean a very different and very dangerous thing. It may mean that at the last my ideas of right and wrong will undergo a complete change—that the things which I now pronounce with the fullest conviction to be cruel and vile, will at that day seem to be righteous and just, and that thus GOD will be fully justified though HE inflict endless torment. But take this statement to pieces and see what it really means. It means, in effect, practical Atheism. It means blank Agnosticism. This is easily shewn. For what this view really tells me is that my deepest moral convictions are wholly worthless, because that which they declare to be cruel and revolting, is right and holy, and

will so appear at the last. But if this be so, then I have lost my sole measure of right and wrong. What is truth or goodness, I know not. Religion, therefore, is impossible. Conscience ceases to be a reliable guide. Revelation is a mere blank, for all revelation pre-supposes the *trustworthiness* of that moral sense to which it is addressed. Thus the above plea, plausible as it seems, is wholly ambiguous, and does in fact lead either to the larger hope or to mere unbelief.

12. In opposition to both these theories stand the views here advocated, which have been always held by some in the Catholic Church; nay, which represent, I believe, most nearly its primitive teaching. These views are, I know, now widely held by the learned, the devout, and the thoughtful in our own and in other Communions. Briefly stated, they amount to this:—That we have ample warrant, alike from reason—from the observed facts and analogies of human life—from our best and truest moral instincts—and from Holy Scripture itself, to entertain a firm hope that GOD our Father's design and purpose is, and has ever been, to save every child of ADAM'S race.

CHAPTER II.

THE POPULAR CREED WHOLLY UNTENABLE.

"These questions * * educated men and women of all classes and denominations are asking, and will ask more and more till they receive an answer. And if we of the clergy cannot give them an answer, which accords with their conscience and reason * * then evil times will come, both for the clergy and the Christian Religion, for many a year henceforth."—CANON KINGSLEY.—*Water of Life.*

"The answer which the popular theology has been tendering for centuries past will not be accepted much longer * * I disclaim any desire to uphold that theology which I have never aided in propagating." Rev. Dr. LITTLEDALE.—*Contemporary Review.*

At the outset let me protest against the common and ignorant prejudice that connects Universalism with lax views of sin or of dogma. I shall have occasion bye and bye to point out that no system so effectually affirms God's hatred of sin as that which teaches that He cannot tolerate its existence for ever. Again, I shall largely base my argument for Universalism on the fullest acceptance of the great Catholic verities. To this point I shall return, confining myself here to the remark that a partial salvation aims a blow at both the Incarnation and the Atonement. Of the Incarnation, a vital part is the taking of the race of man, *as an organic whole*, into God through Jesus Christ, the

second Adam. But with this fundamental idea, a partial salvation is in hopeless contradiction. Not less vital is the blow aimed by the popular creed at the Atonement, for that creed virtually teaches that the Cross is a stupendous failure. This is easily shown. For plainly that which misses its end is a failure. And if the end aimed at be noble, then in proportion is the failure greater and vital. But the Scriptural evidence is overwhelming, that the object of Christ's death was to save the *world*. "The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." He came "that the world through Him might be saved." If then this end be not gained, if the world be not in fact saved, the Atonement is a failure. Disguise the fact as men may, the dilemma is inevitable. Answer or evasion there is none.

The next step will be to state more in detail the various considerations that render it impossible to accept the traditional view of future punishment, or any modification of it which teaches the endless duration of evil, moral or physical, in even a solitary instance; a fact essential to bear in mind, when I refer to the traditional creed or the popular creed anywhere in this book. My first appeal shall be to that primary revelation of Himself which God has implanted in the heart and conscience of man. I am merely expressing the deepest and most mature, though often unspoken, convictions of millions of earnest Christian men and women

when I assert, that to reconcile the popular creed, or any similar belief in Hell, with the most elementary ideas of justice, equity, and goodness (not even to mention mercy), is wholly and absolutely impossible. Thus this belief destroys the *only ground* on which it is possible to erect any religion at all, for it sets aside the primary convictions of the moral sense; and thus paralyses that by which alone we are capable of religion. If human reason be incompetent to decide positively that certain acts assigned to God are evil and cruel, then it is equally incompetent to decide that certain acts of His are just and merciful. Therefore if God be not good, just, and true, in *the human acceptation of these terms*, then the whole basis of revelation vanishes. For if God be not good in our human sense of the word, I have no guarantee that He is true in our sense of truth. If what is called goodness in God in the Bible should prove to be that which we call badness in man, then how can I be assured that, what is called truth in God, may not really be that which in man is called falsehood? Thus no valid communication—no revelation—from God to man is possible; for no reliance can, on this view, be placed on His veracity.

"We dare not," says the Bishop of London, "let go the truth, that the holiness, the goodness, the justice, the righteousness, which the eternal moral law imposes on us as a supreme command, are identical in essential substance, in our minds

and in His."—*Bampt. Lect.* "*We dare not?*" Why? Precisely because, if we do, the foundations of religion collapse—perishing as the moral order perishes. Mere scepticism is our sole refuge. We have lost our standard of right and wrong and are wandering in a pathless desert, creedless, homeless, hopeless, mocked all the while by phantoms of virtues that are probably vices, and of vices that are probably virtues. For let me repeat that if goodness in becoming infinite turns into evil—if infinite love may be consistent with what we call cruelty—then, for aught we know, truth may turn into falsehood, justice into flagrant wrong, light into darkness. Therefore, we *dare not* let go the truth that in our moral nature we have a true revelation of the divine mind, *i.e.*, that the ideas of right and wrong are in their essence *the same* in our minds and in God's—that they are true *universally;* as true beyond the grave as here and now. But if so, then that which so flatly contradicts all our deepest moral convictions, as does the dogma of endless sin (a dogma which, however modified, no imaginable hypothesis can reconcile with either justice or mercy) must be absolutely *false*, and in teaching it we are but libelling God.

The mode in which the ordinary creed does its hateful work of hardening the sceptic, and saddening the most devout, may be shewn by two brief extracts. "All the attempts yet made," says a stern moralist, "to reconcile this doctrine

with divine justice and mercy, are calculated to make us blush alike for the human heart that can strive to justify such a creed, and for the human intellect that can delude itself into a belief that it has succeeded in such justification." "Nothing," says the late General GORDON, "can be more abject and miserable than the usual conception of GOD. * * Imagine to yourself what pleasure it would be to HIM to burn us or to torture us. Can we believe any human being capable of creating us for such a purpose? We credit God with attributes which are utterly hateful to the meanest of men. * * I say that Christian Pharisees deny Christ. * * A hard, cruel set they are, from high to low. When one thinks of the real agony one has gone through in consequence of false teaching, it makes human nature angry with the teachers who have added to the bitterness of life."

The popular view to you is familiar, and perhaps you do not realise its true bearing, or the light in which it really presents the *character* of God. But consider how this dogma of endless evil must strike an enquirer after God, one outside the pale of Christianity, but sincerely desirous of learning the truth. There are such men—there are many such. You tell this enquirer that God is not Almighty only, but all good; that God is indeed love; that God is his father. But these terms are words *without any meaning at all*, if they have not their common

ordinary sense when applied to God. Such a man will say you tell me God is good, but what acts are these you assign to Him? He is a father; but He brings into being myriads of hapless creatures, knowing that there is in store for them a doom unutterably awful. He calls into existence these creatures, whether they will or no; though the bottomless pit is yawning to receive them, and the flames ready to devour them. The question is not, whether they might have escaped; the real question is, *do they in fact escape*, and *does He know* that they will not escape? And you assure me that this Great Being is Almighty! is love essential! is the parent of every one of these creatures, who are doomed and damned! What fair answer do you propose to give to these questions if addressed to you? I may put the question in the words of a well known poet. A lost soul asks—

> "Father of mercies, why from silent earth
> Didst Thou awake and *curse me into birth?*"

Pressed by the irresistible weight of these arguments, many take refuge in ambiguous phrases, *e.g.*, "Be sure God will do the best He can for every man." Ambiguous and empty words, I repeat, as used by the advocates of endless torment. For if they really mean that the *best* an Almighty Being can do for countless myriads of his children is to bestow on them, whether they will or not, an existence, stained with sin from the womb—knowing that in fact

this sin will ripen into endless misery—then such phrases as the above are but so much dust thrown in our eyes, they are as argument beneath refutation. And if they do not mean this, such pleas are worthless as a defence of the ordinary creed. If endless misery is the certain result, known and foreseen, of calling me into existence, then to force on me the gift of life, is to do for me not the best, but the worst possible.

Others take refuge in the vain assertion that the larger hope implies the escape of the wicked from all punishment, and places the sinner on a level with the saint. Let me once for all reply that no statement can be more unfounded. For the very method of healing the finally impenitent, as taught by the larger hope, is the severity of the divine judgment, is that consuming fire, which must burn up all iniquity. Thus the larger hope is especially *bound to teach* for the obstinate sinner the certainty of retribution, for in God's judgment it sees the mode of cure (see chap. v.), the mode in which the grace of the Atonement reaches the touched heart. Thus unrepented sin leads to awful future penalty—to penalty proportioned to the guilt of the sinner and continued till he repent. The larger hope thus not merely accepts, but *emphasises* for the ungodly the dread warning of wrath to come—of the fires of Gehenna—for in these it sees not a wanton revenge, but at once a just retribution and a discipline that heals the obstinate sinner.

Many again seek to mitigate the just horror and loathing which the popular creed inspires, by saying that the torments of Hell are not material but spiritual, and by asserting further (contrary to the plainest teachings of experience) that somehow the majority do really turn to God in this life, or at the last moment of half conscious existence. I say nothing of the bribe thus offered to the selfish instincts of the majority, by the assurance that somehow they will shuffle into heaven, and that only a worthless few perish. But this shabby plea is (1) false from their own standpoint (p. 7), and (2) does not, if true, even touch the central difficulty of the popular creed. For whether our Father *permits* (to use the softest term) the endless misery of countless myriads upon myriads of His own children, or of thousands only; whether Hell receives fifty or only five per cent. of the Sons of God, of the Brothers of Christ Jesus—and again, whether its torments are applied to their bodies or to their spirits, all these are points that, however decided, do not even *touch* the central question, *i.e*, can evil be stronger than God, ever, under any circumstances?—can a Father permit the endless, hopeless, sin and woe of even one of His children, and look on calmly for ever and ever unmoved—can the Bible be mocking us when it teaches a restitution of *all things*, and that a time is coming when God shall be all in all?

Some will, no doubt, say that we have no right to measure God's ways by our private

judgments, no right to seem to dictate what He will or will not, can or cannot do. I reply that this objection rests on a complete misapprehension. We do not presume to discuss what God, in the abstract, can or cannot do, still less to dictate to Him. The argument employed in these pages is open to no such objection as the above, for it is simply this—that God has both in his primary revelation of Himself to our moral sense, and in His written word, distinctly and emphatically declared against the doctrine of endless evil. Because God has so spoken, we therefore speak. Others again assert that endless misery is sufficiently accounted for by saying that it comes as the natural result of sin, and not as arbitrarily decreed. I am wholly unable to see how this in the very least alters the divine promise to restore all things, or annuls the work of Christ, which is to "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Surely the more *natural* the tie between sin and misery, the more assured is the destruction of both; for the closer the bond, the more certain it becomes that to put away, *i.e.*, to abolish (Heb. ix. 26) the one is to abolish the other.

But the law of Continuity, it is said, forbids universalism. Those who go on to the close of life impenitent must be presumed to continue impenitent hereafter. But why? They will continue so only if the forces working for impenitence hereafter are stronger than the forces making for good.

Viewed thus, this objection seems but a round-about way of saying that the devil is stronger in the long run than God. Surely the presumption, even apart from a revealed promise of the restoration of all things is, that evil being an intruder and an alien, and the world being under divine government, this government can never cease working till order and right wholly replace disorder and wrong. Why are we to assume that God means to share His throne with the powers of evil? In fact, we totally err in our estimate of the relative strength of good and evil when we treat the latter as though it were on a par with the former in fibre, in duration, or in essence. For this there is no shadow of excuse: it is dualism thinly disguised. It is this degrading heresy to which the traditional creed is ever tending. I deny, then, any presumption that because evil has gone on for years it will go on always. The logical and moral presumption is precisely the other way, viz., that the weaker will yield to the stronger: the usurper to the lawful owner: the Evil One to God.

Further, the facts of the physical and spiritual worlds are alike fatal to any such theory of continuity. What is creation but a striking breach of continuity? So, too, was the Deluge; so is every earthquake. And it is worth careful noting that the only appeal in Scripture to the laws of physical continuity comes from the unbeliever, and is made *in the interests of scepticism.*—2 Pet. iii. 4. I admit that there

probably is a higher continuity than any we can at present trace. The very breaks in the established order may be but parts of a higher order, and may thus range themselves on the side of and not against a true continuity. But it is impossible to argue that because a certain order of things continues for long unbroken that it will therefore go on for ever. If so, there could be no Creation, no Resurrection, no final Judgment. It is merely suicidal for a Christian to argue as the objection requires.

I turn to consider a further objection frequently alleged against the larger hope. It is said that Probation to be real involves the possibility of some utterly failing. Note first, the ambiguity of this plausible plea. It speaks only of a possibility of failure; I ask, then, *must* some be lost finally if all are put to a real trial? Unless this be so the objection does not help the traditional creed; for if 1,000 persons can be tested without a single failure, why not 10,000 or 100,000? Why not all? But if a real probation of all involves endless sin in some cases, then I reply such probation is an immoral thing. For probation is but a means to an end, viz., the promotion of a higher standard of virtue than if men were not tested. Now it is immoral to use an instrument that brings to some men a higher standard at the cost of the endless ruin of others. A higher type of virtue in the saved would be an evil, if gained practically at

such a price as the hopeless degradation of the lost, and the perpetuation of evil in the universe. Meantime, all the difficulty arises from men believing *probation* to be an adequate description of our position under God's moral government—an assumption *absolutely groundless.* Such conceptions imply a radical error, viz., that God's relation to us is like that of a Head Engineer testing his works—or a Police Inspector on a vast scale. But God is "Our Father," and if so the central fact is, and must be, His *education* of His children. True, we are being tested as a part of our *education*—which is the real conception of our position as God's children.

Realise this truth, and how absurd becomes the objection we are discussing: how truly absurd it becomes to say "God's education *cannot be real unless some of His pupils go to the devil for ever;*" or, there cannot be a second probation—which really means that God cannot continue and complete His work of education.

Some again say—"Why try to solve a question which is probably insoluble, viz., the problem of man's destiny?" In reply we ask what the objection really means? Are we to give up every great question because we can only partly solve it? To do so would be to give up all questions, to bid farewell to all knowledge. For every great question contains an insoluble element. Take, *e.g.*, the problems of Life, of Matter. Take such questions as the Trinity, or the Incarnation. Are we to

give them all up? All human knowledge is in fact the knowledge of things partly known, partly insoluble at present. To act as the objection requires would simply land us in agnosticism, scientific and religious. Lastly, the objection lies equally against the traditional creed, for that decides this so-called insoluble question quite as much as does universalism—a fact which the objectors quietly ignore.

A further plausible argument against universalism is the alleged danger of teaching the larger hope. Those who so argue surely forget what their words involve if true. They involve a serious reflection on the Creator who permits his children, made in His image, to descend to such an abyss of degradation that only an endless Hell can restrain them from sin, and who, knowing this, yet conceals from the vast majority of men this necessary antidote to sin, and who in the Old Testament gave a special revelation of himself, and said nothing of it.

Having premised this, I meet the objection frankly by saying—look at the verdict of history. Its answer is decisive. Never did lust and vice in every guise so rage and riot as when in the middle ages this dogma was most firmly held. Hell fire bred a veritable hell on earth. Those who talk of universalism as antinomian do not face the facts of history. Better were it if they did so, and then were to look at home, and remember

the awful danger of teaching a creed whose fruits are so often those well described in the following striking words, in which a Roman Catholic Priest states twenty years' experience in the Confessional: "The dogma of hell, except in the rarest cases, did no moral good. It never affected the right persons. It tortured innocent young women, and virtuous boys. It appealed to the lowest motives, and the lowest characters. *It never, except in the rarest instances, deterred from the commission of sin.* It caused unceasing mental and moral difficulties. * * It always influenced the wrong people, and in a wrong way. It caused infidelity to some, temptations to others, and misery without virtue to most."—*R. Suffield.*

What, I ask, has the dogma of Hell really effected? Has it checked the growth of heathenism in our cities? Has it kept the artizan in the fold of Christ? Has it evangelised thoroughly so much as a solitary English parish? Ineffective always, such teaching is more than ever so in these days, because the intelligent are by it forced into open revolt, and because all History teaches that gigantic penalties go hand in hand with gigantic crimes, and diminished penalties with diminished sin. Beyond all doubt, infinite punishment for finite sin promotes not fear but incredulity. But true universalism deters from sin, because it preaches a righteous retribution with unequalled force and certainty: on this its creed largely hinges. Restoration is taught

because of retribution, a fact on which too much stress cannot be laid. "*Thou, Lord, art merciful, for thou renderest to every man according to his deeds.*"

But probably the way in which most people satisfy their own minds, when doubts arise as to the endless nature of future torment is this: "Endless pain and torment is but the result of sin freely chosen and finally persisted in by the sinner." I reply (I.) if endless sin be repugnant to every true conception of God, if it be essentially immoral, then you do not alter this fact by any possible theory as to the power of the human will. (II.) Next, you cannot fairly oppose a mere theory to a revealed assurance of the reconciliation of all things to God. (III.) This theory of unlimited free will in a creature has been pronounced incredible by great thinkers—absolutely impartial. Morally viewed, one born in sin cannot possibly be wholly free. (IV.) But it is said, that if man be not wholly free, his goodness is but a mechanical thing. If so, I reply, better ten thousand fold a mechanical goodness that keeps one at the side of God for ever, than a wholly unrestrained freedom which leads to the devil. But the assertion is in fact as hollow as it is plausible. Man is not a machine because the power of defying God finally is not granted to him. Freedom enough is granted to resist God for ages; freedom to suffer and to struggle; to reap what has been sown, till

taught by experience, the will of the creature is bent to the will of the Creator. If all this does not involve a freedom that is most real, then human words are vain as a vehicle for human thought. (V.) Further, on the theory of absolute human freedom, how can God be said to will the salvation of all men? for that which He really wills is that men should have a will so free as to be able to defeat his purpose. How can He really will the salvation of any man, to whom He gives a will, which He knows will in fact render that salvation impracticable? (VI.) A reasonable theory of human free will is in perfect accord with universalism: so true is this that the advocates of the larger hope have been the champions of free will, *and often base on it their teachings*, while the advocates of endless sin and hell, like Augustine and Calvin, have been enemies to free will. (VII.) Further, this pleading for endless sin in hell on the ground that it is freely chosen by man, would, if true, but enhance the great difficulty of the popular creed —the victory of evil; for plainly, the more free on man's part, the more wilful his choice of sin, so much the more complete is the triumph of evil, so much the more absolute is the failure of the cross. What is this plea but in fact seeking to vindicate the Almighty by laying stress on His defeat, seeking to justify Omnipotence by emphasising His impotence? (VIII.) This plea contradicts itself; for to assert that because of man's freedom he can go on for ever choosing evil, is

in fact, to plead not for human freedom, but for servitude, the basest, the most degrading. Take the assertion to pieces, and it comes to this. To preserve man's dignity he must be permitted to become the slave of evil if he will, the associate of devils for ever !—to secure his prerogative of freedom he must be allowed to sink into hopeless servitude to sin ! What would you say were an earthly father to reason thus ?—I will permit my child to become a hopeless drunkard for the sake of preserving his sobriety ; I will permit my daughter to sink into vice for the sake of preserving her chastity. Under these circumstances, it is mere rhetoric to talk of 'forcing' the will ; no more is meant than a reasonable pressure, to which the will freely yields. (IX.) Nay, the only condition of true freedom for man is the divine control. The paradox is true —constraint of man's will is his emancipation. "If the Son make you free, then are ye free indeed." To plead against this constraint of the divine grace, as annulling human freedom, would be as wise as it would be, on the part of the friends of some fever-stricken patient, to object to the restraints of the sick room and the physician. (X.) Next, is it not strange that this claim to be independent of God, to defy His control, is made for man, in one direction only, *i.e.*, precisely when and where it may do to him irreparable mischief ? We cannot add so much as a cubit to our stature, cannot determine so much as the length of an eyelash. We cannot of

ourselves take a single step heavenwards. But we can, on this theory, take as many steps hellwards as we please. We cannot save ourselves, but we can damn ourselves. (XI.) But again, it obviously follows that if man is in this sense free, *God is not free.* God, as we know from His Word, wills the salvation of every man, and if He cannot, because of man's will, effect this purpose, then He is not free. He wills, but His will is useless to save ; it is fettered and bound. And what is this but a virtual denial of the true God ? Whoever such a being may be, He is not the God of the Bible. To the very essence of God it pertains to be sovereign and supreme. "I appeal to the tribunal of a sovereign judge," says Canon WESTCOTT, "whose will is right and whose *will must prevail.*"—*Hist. Faith.* And again, "It is enough for us to acknowledge the supreme triumph of divine love from first to last—one will of one God reconciling the world to Himself in Jesus Christ His only Son."—*Ib.* "I am obliged to believe," says MAURICE, "that we are living in a restored order. I am sure that restored order will be carried out by the full triumph of God's loving will."—*Life* ii. 19. These words sum up the teaching of Scripture. For the Bible, while recognising in man a power of choice, so that no one is saved against his will, but by God's working in him a good will, yet points distinctly to God's will as supreme, as certain finally to prevail. "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—*Ps.* xlvi. 10.

"He doeth according to His will, in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth."—*Dan.* iv. 35. "Whatever the Lord pleased, that did He, in heaven and on earth." —*Ps.* cxxxv. 6. Nay, Scripture goes farther still. It tells us plainly that man has been made "subject to vanity (sin and imperfection), *not willingly*, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope."—*Rom.* viii. 20. Again, "God hath shut up all unto disobedience that He might have mercy upon all."—*Rom.* xi. 32. And so of salvation we are plainly told that it is "*not of Him who willeth*, but of God who sheweth mercy." He "worketh all things according to the counsel of His own will." It is He "that worketh in us both to will and to do." Our Lord's words, again, are express, "*compel* them to come in." A host of such passages might be added if space permitted. Are we at liberty to explain them away? Indeed, when controversy is forgotten, we all in fact admit this divine supremacy. So the Prayer Book tells us of hearts as "in God's rule," and that He disposes them as it seems best, not to human free will, but to His will and governance. It tells us that God can "*order the unruly wills* of sinful men." This is precisely what we teach. (XII.) And that which Scripture so plainly affirms, the very idea of redemption implies. For redemption is either an empty sound, or it implies setting free the will of man, *i.e.*, bringing it into harmony with God's will. "The bondage I groan under

is a bondage of the will, and that has led me to acknowledge God as *emphatically the redeemer of the will;* * * but if of my will then of all wills."—F. D. MAURICE. I have stated my glad acquiescence in human freedom, only preserving God's freedom. For if consciousness assure me of a freedom very real in its own sphere, yet there is another side—a divinity that "shapes our ends, rough hew them how we will."

Let us next see what the admitted facts of life testify as to the amount of freedom permitted to man. Here I find again the same two-fold order, a true freedom indeed, but a freedom regulated and controlled. In the first place man can exercise no choice at all as to the time and place of his birth—facts all important in deciding his religious belief, and through that his character —no choice as to the many and very complex hereditary influences moulding his entire life, though most often he knows it not; nay, affecting for good or for evil every thought, every word, every act of his.

Further, man can exercise no choice at all as to the strength of that will he receives ; no choice at all as to the circumstances that surround him in infancy and childhood, and which colour his whole life ; no choice at all as to the original weakness of his nature, and its inherent tendency to evil. More, still, man can exercise no choice at all on this *vital* question, whether he will or will

not have laid on him the awful perils, in which, on the popular view, the mere fact of life involves him. You tell me of the terrible risks of human life, of its infinite responsibilities; you are fond of enlarging on the taint of original sin, on our inability to help ourselves. True, but what does all this prove? surely this, that a good Being would not have bestowed such a gift except with a purpose, clear and definite, that all should issue in good. "Nothing," says Bishop NEWTON, "is more contrariant to the divine nature and attributes than for God to bestow existence on any being, whose destiny He fore-knows must terminate in wretchedness without recovery."—*Final State of Man.*

"Let us take an illustration that we may see this more clearly. A frail and narrow bridge swings across a gulf, fearful and fathomless. On this, as it rocks wildly in the winds, a father places his young child. Beyond, on the other side of the gulf, he has placed a prize beyond estimate, which he promises to the child if he passes the bridge safely, and then compels him to go, commanding him to look neither to the right nor left. * * The boy, heedless and disobedient, hesitates, reels, the bridge quivers for a moment, swings from under him, and hurled into the gulf, he is caught and impaled on a sharp rock down the abyss. There he hangs for long and weary years, agonizing and writhing in torture, and crying to his father for help and

deliverance. But his father turns a deaf ear to all his entreaties, wholly indifferent to the horrible sufferings of his child, and justifies himself by saying, "The boy might have passed the bridge safely, he was warned, and he suffers justly." Now, would not all men and angels pronounce this father a monster and a fiend? And shall God place me on the frail and narrow bridge of life, stretched over the awful and flaming abyss of endless perdition, with the possibility of a heaven beyond, and then leave me there to cross it, swinging fearfully in the winds of temptation, knowing that as a matter of fact I shall, in crossing, be precipitated into the horrible pit, there to lie for ever in hopeless agony?" Who would not cry out with the poet—

> "And canst thou then look down from perfect bliss
> And see me plunging in this dark abyss,
> *Calling thee father in a sea of fire,*
> *Or pouring blasphemies at thy desire?*"

Yes, the question is essentially this, and no argument can evade this enquiry:—Is God good, and is He a just God, as men use these terms, or is He not? Indeed, if the God we worship be not good, as we call goodness, it were better for us not to worship Him at all; better for us to worship nothing at all, than to worship an evil deity. But the popular view represents God as doing that which the most degraded human being would not do. "This view," says the Rev. Dr. LITTLEDALE, "puts God on a moral level with

the devisers of the most savagely malignant revenge known to history."—*Cont. Review*—words that fall very far short of the truth.

To this in fact it comes, that the popular view, while admitting God's power and goodness to be infinite, yet teaches that evil shall ultimately prevail—a position obviously untenable and indeed absurd. "Order and right *cannot but prevail* finally in a universe under His government."—BUTLER'S *Analogy*. For argue as you please, refine, explain away, it continues still an *insuperable* difficulty, on the popular view, or any mere modification of it, that the Devil is victor, and triumphs over God and goodness. It is nothing at all to the purpose to allege, either that those who perish finally have chosen evil of their own will, or that all evil beings are shut up in chains and torment: it is the very permanence of evil in any shape: its continued presence—*no matter from what cause*—that constitutes the triumph of the Evil One. "To suppose," says Canon WESTCOTT, "that evil once introduced into the world is for ever, appears to be at variance with the essential conception of God as revealed to us."—*Hist. Faith*. I repeat that if evil be as strong as God, as enduring as God himself, there is no escape from the conclusion that you proclaim in so teaching the triumph of the Evil One. You are proclaiming, not the Catholic faith, but a dualism. You blot from the faith of Christendom its fundamental article,

"I believe in *one* God the Father *Almighty*." What are all heresies, all errors, that have stained the Church of God, compared with this supreme heresy, this dualism, which seats evil on the throne of the universe, a power enduring as God himself? The torments, physical and mental, of the popular Hell, awful as they are, recede into almost nothing as compared with the far more awful spectacle of God vanquished, of God trying to save but failing, and watching His children as they slowly sink beneath the endless sway of Satan; of God's Son returning, not in triumph, but in defeat; of the Cross shattered, prostrate, paralysed.

Again, so revolting to our moral nature is the popular creed, that it, more than any other cause, as has been said, produces the most wide-spreading unbelief. "Compared with this," remarks J. S. MILL, "all objections to Christianity sink into insignificance." Let me speak plainly. Too long—far too long—have the clergy been silent; content to complain of a scepticism, of which a main cause is a doctrine they continue to teach (without, I believe in many cases, more than a languid and traditional acceptance of it). And as this doctrine is the parent of unbelief at home, so abroad in the mission field it is a grievous hindrance to the spread of the gospel. The very heathen are shocked by a dogma more cruel and horrible than anything of which they have ever heard; the more so when they are asked to receive

this awful teaching as good news! There is certainly a chapter of missionary work yet unwritten, which would, if frankly told, surprise the friends of the traditional creed. This is a chapter which any thoughtful person can construct, if he will try to place himself in the position of an intelligent heathen, when he learns that the *good news* of the missionary contains a revelation often more ghastly and cruel than any that has crossed his mind. I repeat that no thoughtful man can believe a doctrine condemned by the conscience; and so men will seek a refuge in scepticism, when they hear the clergy teaching these evil traditions (for they are no more) as part of the revelation of that God, whose blessed Son tasted death for every man. Yes, the peculiar horror of the popular creed is, that it sets up evil as an object of worship—of reverence —of love.

I invite you here to consider a weighty and solemn fact. Amid the crowd of sins there stands out one in sad pre-eminence because it has not forgiveness "for the age," *eis ton aiona*, its forgiveness demands ages—demands a period indefinitely long. Now, from our Lord's own words we may understand in what lay the essence of this awful sin. It lay in confounding the good and evil Spirit, in ascribing to the one the works of the other. If, then, any one whose conscience whispers that endless misery can only be inflicted by an evil being on his own children, still persists

in ascribing its infliction to God, does not such an one incur sad and awful risk of committing this greatest of all sins ? I invite your earnest attention to this. Does your conscience say I cannot reconcile this awful doctrine with any idea I can form of love, of justice, or of goodness, and yet I believe it ? If so, then beware lest in ascribing such things to God, you come perilously near to, if indeed you are not guilty of, this sin, which is of all sins the greatest (known in the popular creed as the unpardonable sin.)

Yes, the question of all questions is, is God indeed love, is the gospel really good news, not possible but *actual* glad tidings to all ? All around us thoughtful men are more than ever reflecting on these points ; what answer do you propose to give ? They are thus enquiring—pondering—of themselves, of their lot, of their hopes and fears in the future :—"I find myself in this world" (so run their thoughts) ; "on me are laid, *whether I will or no*, the awful responsibilities of time and of eternity. At my entrance on life I received not a nature upright, but one already fallen, and that for no fault of mine ; stained, and that with no sin of mine. And to this nature so weak, so fallen, so helpless, come, in every variety, temptations, wiles, and allurements such that no man has wholly withstood, or can withstand, their subtle power. Now, if this be a part of my training, if it be a path to better things, I can in submission—nay, in gladness even—bend to my

Creator's will: I can take courage, and though faint, still pursue the narrow path that leads to life. But how can I believe that a loving Father —all powerful as He is all good—does so arrange, does so permit, that for any one soul, this sad and fallen estate of human nature shall prove but the portal to endless woe?" So men reason. I do not wonder, I rejoice, that they have ceased to believe, that a divine parent can do that which an earthly parent could not do without eternal infamy. For next imagine any degree of folly and sin that can stain human nature, to be accumulated on the head of some sinful child of man; and I ask, can you believe that any human father, any mother, that once loved that child, could bring herself calmly to sentence her offspring to an endless Hell; nay, herself to keep that child there in evil that never shall terminate?

Take next a clear exposure of the traditional creed from another point of view. Christ, we know from the Bible, is the Saviour of the world. He is, therefore, on the popular view, the Saviour of those whom in fact He does not save. This evidently follows. But this principle once admitted, it is wholly immaterial, as a matter of reasoning, what the percentage of the lost may be. Although out of the countless myriads of our race but a few hundreds were saved, God would still *save every man.* Indeed, though *not even one solitary soul* were saved, God would still, on the principle popularly held, save *every*

man. For that principle is this, that to offer salvation, though the offer come to nothing, is to save. Hence it undoubtedly follows that God might be the Saviour of the whole race of men, *though not one soul were in fact saved.* All might be *saved* on this principle, though all were in fact *damned!*

But there is a further difficulty in the way of the popular creed. Who are those whom it represents as finally unsaved?— the finally impenitent, the most obstinate sinners. And what is that but to say, in so many words, that those precisely whose case furnished the strongest reason for the Saviour's mission, are unsaved? Admit their guilt, recognise as we do to the very utmost the need and the certainty of retribution; still, when all this has been said, it remains true that Christ came to save the "lost," and if so, the more "lost" any are, the more Christ came to seek and to save them, and if he fails, the more marked his failure. Thus on the ordinary view, precisely those for whom Christ especially came receive no salvation, those whose claims are strongest perish, those whose claims on a Saviour are weakest, are rescued. Let us apply this consideration to a plea often used to disguise, if that may be, the awful fact of endless torment by teaching that but few, comparatively, will share this horrible lot. Elsewhere (p. 7) I have shewn the futility of this plea, on other grounds —but here I desire to press this aspect of the

case, that these few are precisely those, whose case appeals most of all to a Saviour. Hence, so to argue, implies a misconception of the very essence of the Gospel. Am I to say the Good Physician can heal all except those who need him most? He came to save *sinners* (emphatically sinners). Am I to read the passage thus: He came to save all sinners *except the greatest?*

But further, there is this most grave difficulty; all sin, be it never so black (and God forbid that I should even seem to weaken its blackness), is but finite. Yet, for these finite sins, I am told, an infinite punishment is the due penalty. But finite and infinite are wholly incommensurable terms. Have you ever set yourself seriously to realise what punishment, protracted *for ever and ever* indeed means? In fact the idea of illimitable time mocks our utmost efforts to grasp it. "The imagination can come to a stand nowhere or ever. On the mind goes, heaping up its millions and billions and quadrillions of millions. It is to no purpose—time, without a beginning —without an end—still confronts it. As thus thought of, the mind recoils from the contemplation, horrified, paralysed with terror." If we grasp never so faintly the idea of what an *infinite* punishment means, it becomes clear that no proposition more revolting to the idea of justice can be stated than this, that finite sins deserve an infinite penalty. Expand the finite as you will, and it still falls infinitely short of infinity.

Hence, it is but the sober statement of sober fact, to assert that a single sentence of unending torment would outweigh the *whole sins* of the *whole human race.* To prove this I need but assume that, to which every conscience responds, that what is finite can in justice receive only a finite punishment. But any possible number of finite sins put together will still fall short (nay, infinitely short) of infinity—of infinite guilt.* Add together all sins ever committed, be their blackness what it may, be their horrors never so great; still the sum of all, because the guilt of finite mortals is but finite, and unless all justice is to be outraged, would deserve a sentence that, however awful, would be finite. Hence it follows that a single sentence of *infinite misery* would undoubtedly outweigh, if there be such a thing as justice, the sins of all men who have ever lived.

Further, it is said—for what have not men said, at what straw have they not grasped, in vain attempts to support a doctrine that each day crumbles under their touch,—it has actually been argued that a sin is infinite, because committed

* If it is said, that there may be some infinite evil in sin, that, even if true (which nobody knows and Scripture nowhere teaches), does not make human guilt infinite. For on any just principle, guilt is determined by the capacities and powers of the agent, and all these are in man strictly finite. Nay, the Bible, so far from taking this view, tells us that Israel has received of the Lord's hand *double* for all her sins, which involves a direct contradiction of any such theory of infinite guilt.

against an infinite being; so that, I suppose, to rob a nobleman would be a greater crime morally, than to deprive a beggar of his last penny? Again, it is said, that perhaps the flames of Hell may be needed to terrorize some far distant sinful orb; that rebels against God in some other planet may read, by the light of Hell-fire, the dangers of sin. Yes, it has been gravely alleged that a Being, whose name is Love, will light, and keep alight through unending ages, a ghastly living torch for such a purpose as this—a torch—each atom of which is composed of a lost soul, once His child, once made in His image, once redeemed by the Cross of His dear Son! You know this has been taught, and yet you actually complain that men are sceptical, and that thoughtful artizans reject such a creed with scorn.

And let us not forget how much this belief has fostered in man a spirit of cruelty. It is sad, but true, to recollect how much of the suffering inflicted by man on his brother man, has been due, directly or indirectly, to the belief in Hell. How many ghastly fires has it not helped to light up here on earth, each containing a living, agonizing human being, often thus punished for a trifling error in creed? For if men believed that God would light up the gloomy fires of Hell and keep them blazing to all eternity, it was an easy and a natural step, to set up in His name a little copy of His justice, and thus, as it were, to anticipate God's sentence. "As the souls of

heretics are hereafter to be eternally burning in Hell," such was the reasoning of Queen Mary in defence of her awful persecution, "there can be nothing more proper than for me to imitate the divine vengeance, by burning them here on earth." I say, that however familiar this may be, it is necessary to ponder well the sad facts, for, by awaking a righteous horror and indignation, we may often most effectually combat such dogmas. And more must be said, not alone have the popular doctrines done all this, but they have greatly influenced for evil the general course of human legislation, and human thought. We may assuredly find traces of the baneful influence of a belief in Hell-fire, in a spirit of cruelty infused into many laws once current, now, and justly, abhorred by all. Nay, it has indeed poisoned the very fount of pity and love, by representing Him, whose we are, and before whom we bow, as calmly looking on, during the endless cycles of eternity, at the sin and pain of myriads upon myriads of His creatures.

But further, it must be added, that by this shocking creed the moral tone is lowered all round, wherever it is accepted. Men are by it familiarized with the idea of suffering and sin as permanent facts. They have even in some sort learned to consider Heaven as dependent upon the belief in an eternal Hell. Even the holiest men believing the popular creed are unconsciously depraved, morally and spiritually. You will

find, for instance, one so holy and so revered as KEBLE, pleading (see hymn for second Sunday in Lent), for endless torment, on the ground that if this were not true, then endless bliss in Heaven would also not be true. To put it plainly, he would, as I understand his words, purchase Heaven's unending bliss at the terrible cost of the endless, hopeless, torture of the lost! Here I will only say, that I know not whether his logic, or his moral tone be more unsound. Compare the spirit of KEBLE with, I will not say the spirit of Christ, but with that of St. Paul, who wished himself accursed from Christ, if thereby he could save his brethren. As to KEBLE'S argument, that will be fully answered in considering, in a later chapter, *St. Matt.* xxv. 46. Meantime, as a further illustration, I copy the following from a periodical lying before me: "I was talking the other day with a very learned Catholic ecclesiastic, who told me that he had been called on to give the last sacraments to a poor Irishman. He found his penitent with some free-thinking friend, who was arguing that there was no Hell. The dying Celt raised himself up with much indignation; 'no Hell,' he exclaimed, 'then where is the poor man's *consolation?*'"

And this difficulty goes further still; for we cannot suppose that the saints in Heaven are without any memory of the past. Even DIVES, in the flames of Hades, remembers with pity his

brethren. But unless you make the impossible supposition, that the blessed lose all memory in Heaven, then they must either suffer keenly at the thoughts of the torments of their dear ones lost in Hell, and tormented for ever and ever; or they must be on a *lower level*, morally and spiritually, than was even DIVES—choose which alternative you please. To this dilemma no answer has ever been given, for no answer is possible. If Hades kindle the sympathy of the lost, shall Heaven kill the sympathy of the blessed? If the blessed sympathise with the torments of the lost, can they enjoy even a momentary happiness? If they fail to sympathise, are they not sunk in selfishness and debased? Or shall we say that God actually maims His redeemed, depriving them of knowledge and memory, lest they should miss their lost ones? On this view God's ways are so awful that if known they would wither up the very joys of Heaven, and so He shuts out pity, and wraps the blessed in a mantle of selfish ignorance. I know nothing more degrading or revolting in the traditional creed than the baseness of its heavenly state. Fancy a mother thrilled through with bliss while (near, or far off, it matters not) her child is in the grip of devils; a wife joining in the angelic harmonies, while her husband for ever blasphemes!

Such is the Heaven of the ordinary creed; if it be not something worse still, an exulting over

the torments of the lost. To show that this is no mere figure of speech, I append a few extracts. They are from sources so widely apart as a medieval schoolman and a modern puritan. "That the saints may *enjoy* their beatitude more thoroughly, and give more abundant thanks for it to God, *a perfect sight* of the punishment of the damned is granted them."—*St. Thomas—Summa* iii. Take another instance from PETER LOMBARD. "Therefore the elect shall go forth to see the torments of the impious, seeing which they will not be grieved, but will be *satiated with joy* at the sight of the *unutterable* calamity of the impious."—*Senten.* iv. 50. Again, hear another from a modern divine. "The *view of the misery of the damned* will double the ardour of the love and gratitude of the saints in Heaven." This is the opinion of the once famous JONATHAN EDWARDS. Another American divine uses even stronger language. "This display of the divine character," said S. HOPKINS, "will be most *entertaining* to all who love God — will give them the highest and most ineffable pleasure; should the fire of this eternal punishment cease, it would in a great measure obscure the light of Heaven, and put an end to a great part of the happiness and glory of the blessed."—*Works*, vol. iv. *Serm.* xiii. To this the popular creed has degraded the ministers of Christ, to penning passages like the above (easily to be multiplied) —passages, than which all literature does not contain anything more revolting. I must ask

you, as a relief from these truly fearful words, to read the following touching picture (not this time from an ecclesiastical source) :—

> What if a soul redeemed, a spirit that loved
> While yet on earth, and was beloved in turn,
> And still remembered every look and tone
> Of that dear earthly sister, who was left
> Among the unwise virgins at the gate :
> Itself admitted with the bridegroom's train—
> What if this spirit redeemed, amid the host
> Of chanting angels, in some transient lull
> Of the eternal anthem, heard the cry
> Of its lost darling, whom in evil hour
> Some wilder pulse of nature led astray,
> And left an outcast in a world of fire,
> Condemned to be the sport of cruel fiends,
> Sleepless, unpitying, masters of the skill
> To wring the maddest ecstasies of pain,
> From worn-out souls that only ask to die—
> *Would it not long to leave the bliss of heaven,*
> *Bearing a little water in its hand,*
> *To moisten those poor lips that plead in vain ;*
> *With Him we call our Father ?*
>
> O. W. HOLMES.—*The Poet at the Breakfast Table.*

Nor have I yet done with this point. I say next that the popular creed does in fact teach men to think lightly of sin. This seems a paradox, and no doubt you wonder : but consider for a moment what the fact is. Tell me that God will permit an eternal hell, with its miserable population of the lost, to go on sinning to all eternity ; and what idea is it you really convey to me ? It is, I reply, the *toleration of sin.* Have you ever thought of this ? " Nothing so effectually teaches men to bear with sin as the popular creed, because we profess to believe that God

will bear with it for ever." Further, I say that the practical effect of the ordinary creed is to teach men to think lightly of sin in a very large class of cases, *e.g.*, where a careless or ungodly life has been lived, and no apparent repentance has marked the closing scene. For to those who believe that the few days or moments remaining of life on a sick bed, are the sole period in which salvation is possible, how irresistible must be the temptation to patch up a hollow peace, to accept anything in lieu of a genuine repentance. And so not the thoughtless, but teachers grave and holy —*e.g.*, Dr. PUSEY—do in fact, as they endeavour to escape the awful difficulties of the ordinary creed, lay stress on the possibility or probability of men leading a wicked life, up to the very last moment of existence, and in that last moment receiving the divine grace. Can any teaching be at once more repugnant to all experience, and more likely to cause the young and the careless to make light of sin ?

On the other hand, it is, I believe, often precisely those who most deeply feel the taint and evil of sin who reject most completely the popular creed ; for in proportion to their horror at sin, is the depth of their conviction that sin cannot go on for ever. There is, too, this further question, if sin is to endure for ever in hell, must it not increase and go on increasing through all eternity ? Think to what point of horror the accumulated sin of the myriads of the lost will

have reached, when even a few of the cycles of eternity are over: and this vast and inconceivable horror and taint is to go *on*, and *on*, and *on*, for *ever*, and *ever*, and *ever increasing*, under the rule of Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. "Think how grotesque a parody of the divine justice it is to say, as the popular creed does, that God requires obedience and righteousness here, but if he cannot have these, He will be satisfied with endless disobedience and sin hereafter as a substitute. We are gravely told that if the wrong be not righted within a specified time, justice will be satisfied to increase the wrong infinitely, and perpetuate it to all eternity." I repeat, that the powers of imagination, if taxed to the utmost, could not conceive any more ludicrous parody of justice than the above.

There is again, a difficulty—an impossibility rather—in reconciling the popular creed with the view, which either Holy Scripture or reason give of punishment—its object and nature. Apart from all question of its justice—apart, too, from the horror it excites—endless, hopeless torment, is a useless, and therefore a wanton, infliction: it is a mere barbarity, because it is only vindictive, and in no sense remedial. There is something positively sickening in the thought of the uselessness of penalty prolonged, when all hope of amendment is over, and when retribution has been fully exacted. To go on

punishing for ever, simply for punishment sake, shocks every sentiment of justice. And the case is so much the worse when, as remarked, the punishment is really the prolongation of sin, when it is but making sin endless. But the true view of punishment is not to oppose, but to combine its retributive and remedial aspects, for through retribution it aims at amendment. Our day has seen a complete revolution in the ideas men form of punishment and its end: in few things has the advance been more marked over the past than in our recognition of the true object of penalty. The whole spirit of punishment has been altered with the change in men's minds, and a higher tone now everywhere prevails. But let me ask, to whom is due this marked change for the better in our ideas of punishment? Surely to that Great Being who guides and orders by His providence all human things. This being so, it is wholly incredible to assign to the divine punishments this very character of mere vindictiveness which men have in all enlightened systems abandoned. This is, I repeat, impossible to believe, for when God chastises it is *for our profit*, as the Bible says. He punishes, as an old Father puts it, medicinally. Yes, it is impossible to believe the ordinary dogma; for if God does indeed by His providence —by His Spirit—direct and enlighten men's minds, leading them to higher and truer thoughts on this subject (as on all others), then to suppose that His own punishments are regulated on the

very system, which He has taught us to abandon, is truly impossible. Nor can I close this subject without remarking that there is a highly significant expression found in that very passage, most often on the lips of the defenders of endless pain, which yet, curiously enough, furnishes the material for an answer to their creed: I speak of *St. Matthew* xxv. 46. The term there applied to the punishment of the ungodly is not the ordinary Greek word to denote penalty, but it is a term *(kolasis)* denoting, literally, *pruning*, *i.e.*, a corrective chastisement—an age-long (but reformatory) punishment.

CHAPTER III.

"*THE POPULAR CREED WHOLLY UNTENABLE.*"

"Far be it from me to make light of the demerit of sin. But endless punishment—I admit my inability (I would say it reverently) to admit this belief together with a belief in the Divine goodness—the belief that God is Love, that His tender mercies are over all His works."—JOHN FOSTER on *Future Punishment.*

PURSUING our remarks, I must also remind you of another feature of the popular belief, which seems to present a great difficulty; it is what I must call its paltriness, its poorness. Let us for the moment not think of God as a good, loving, and righteous Being. Let us now simply regard Him as great, as irresistible, as almighty. Viewed thus, how difficult is it to accept that account which the ordinary creed gives us of this Being's attempt at the rescue of His fallen creature man. An Almighty Being puts forth every effort to gain a certain end; sends inspired men to teach others; works miracles, signs, wonders in heaven and on earth, all for this end of man's safety; nay, at the last, sends forth His own Son—very God—Himself Almighty. The Almighty Son stoops not alone to take our nature on Him, but

lower still—far lower—stoops to degradation; meekly accepts insult and scourging, bends to the bitter cross even, and all this to gain a certain end. And yet, we are told, this end is not gained after all, man is not saved, for countless myriads are in fact left to hopeless, endless misery; and that though for every one of these lost ones, so to speak, has been shed the life blood of God's own Son. Now, if I may be permitted to speak freely, it is wholly inconceivable that the definite plan of an Almighty Being should end in failure —that this should be the result of the agony of the eternal Son. God has in the face of angels and of men, before the universe and its gaze of wonder, entered Himself into the arena, become Himself a combatant, has wrestled with the foe, only to be defeated. I can bring myself to imagine those, who reject the Deity of Christ, as believing in His defeat; but it is passing strange that those who believe Him to be "very God," are loudest in asserting His failure.

And continue this thought. If we think of God at all worthily, we cannot help thinking of Him as working for high and worthy ends. Therefore we cannot help thinking of Him, as in creation, working for some end worthy of Himself. But what end does the popular creed assign to Him? A creation broken, marred, mutilated, ruined, and so to continue for ever. A creation ending in misery and endless sin to infinite numbers of the created; and all this

misery and horror brought into sharper relief by a vain and fruitless attempt to save all: by a purpose of love declared to all, and yet not in fact reaching all: a creation which is but the portal to hell for one half or more of the created. And you gravely ask thoughtful enquirers to believe this; to believe that for such an end, and contemplating these horrors destined never to cease, the morning stars are described as singing together, and all the sons of God shouting for joy on the morning of creation.

The sons of God shouted for joy, as they contemplated creation; but they should have wept had the popular creed been true. For that creed represents the present life as darkened by the prospect of evil triumphant; our present sorrows made keener by the prospect of a future life, which will be, not to the wicked merely, but to the whole race of man, an evil and a curse—a life which every good man would, if he could, bring to an instant end. To prove this, I will take a definite example. Further, I will concede to the advocates of the popular creed one point of very considerable importance (to which they have no right), *e.g.*, that the number of the saved greatly exceeds the lost. "Suppose it were offered to the father of three children to take his choice whether two should be received into heaven and one condemned to hell, or the whole should be annihilated in death. What would a parent say? Where is the father who would dare to

secure the bliss of two children at the cost of the endless misery of one ? Which of the family would he select as the victim, whose undying pain should secure his brothers' immortal joy ? Is there any one living who would not suffer himself and his children to sink back again into nothingness rather than purchase heaven at such a price ? Now, if so, if we should so act in the case of our own children, *we are bound morally* to make the same choice with respect to every one. No moral being would consent to purchase eternal happiness at the price of another's eternal woe. Hence it follows that a future life, on the popular view, is an evil to the human race, *not to the wicked, but to all.* For if annihilation of the whole race should be tendered as the alternative, no moral being could, as has been shewn, refuse to accept it."—BARLOW *on Eternal Punishment.* Thus, there is, I repeat, if the popular creed be true, no alternative, no escape from the conclusion that creation is an evil thing, and a future life a curse to the whole human family. What is to be our answer to the scorn of the sceptic, to the challenge of the atheist ? So long as we cling to an immoral creed there is none—absolutely none. What awful mockery is a gospel whose message is, in fact, damnation to countless myriads, whose issue is endless sin—sin ever ripening, ever progressing. And I am to preach such a gospel as good news ! as glad tidings of great joy ! glad tidings of never ending pain and curse ! and sin !

But again, there comes this very serious obstacle to accepting the popular creed. I shall state it thus, either this creed is true or false. If false—the question is ended. If true, can this strange fact be explained—that *nobody acts as if he believed it?* I say this, for any man who so believed, and who possessed but a spark of common humanity—to say nothing of charity—could not rest, day or night, so long as one sinner remained who might be saved. To this all would give place—pleasure, learning, business, art, literature; nay, life itself would be too short for the terrible warnings, the burning entreaties, the earnest pleadings, that would be needed to rouse sinners from their apathy, and to pluck them from endless tortures. Ask me what you will, but do not ask me to believe that any human being, who is convinced that perhaps his own child, his wife, his friend, his neighbour even, is in danger of endless torment, could, if *really* persuaded of this, live as men now live, even the best men. Who can avoid the inevitable conclusion that its warmest adherents really, though unconsciously, find their dogmas absolutely incredible? These remarks also explain an obvious difficulty, viz., it has been shewn how the popular creed cuts at the root of all religion, poisoning the very fountains whence we draw our conceptions of love, of righteousness, of truth (pp. 18—20). But if so, it may be fairly asked, how is it that society subsists, that morality is not extinct? Because, I reply

unhesitatingly, because no society, no individual, can possibly act, or has in fact acted, on such a creed, in the real business of life. It is simply impossible: who would dare so much as to smile, if he really believed endless torments were certain to be the portion of some member of his household—it may be of himself? Marriage would be a crime; each birth the occasion of an awful dread. The shadow of a possible hell would darken every home, sadden every family hearth. All this becomes evident when we reflect that to perpetuate the race would be to help on the perpetuation of moral evil. For if this creed be true, out of all the yearly births a steady current is flowing on to help to fill the abyss of hell, to make larger and vaster the total of moral evil which is to endure for ever. "The world would be *one vast madhouse*," says the American scholar HALLSTED, "if a realising and continued pressure of such a doctrine was present." Remark again how this doctrine breaks down the moment it is really put to the test. Take a common case: a man dies—active, benevolent, useful in life, but not a religious man, not devout. By the popular creed, such a man has gone to hell for ever. But who really believes that? nay, instinctively our words grow softer when we speak of the dead in all cases.

A peculiar difficulty attending the traditional creed requires to be pointed out here. It is that connected with the Christian doctrine of the

forgiveness of sins. Doubtless God always accepted the penitent. But a wholly novel duty of forgiving has emerged since Christ said, "Love your enemies, do good to them which hate (are hating, keep hating) you."—*Luke* vi. 27. No doubt in this novel view we have a distinct revelation of the divine character. But if so, is it possible to suppose that the Gospel presents us with two contradictory pictures of God, *e.g.*, a God who does good to his enemies only for the few years they spend on earth, and then proceeds to do them all possible evil in hell? If God's attitude towards his worst foes is love, that attitude is permanent, is eternal; nay, must be so. Whatever be the sin of his enemies, He must be to them the same eternal God of love, and never more so than when He most inexorably punishes.

Take next a grave difficulty which arises on the popular view. How can you on any such principle deal equitably with the mass of men? Let us speak plainly: do tell me who and what are the great, nay, the *overwhelming* majority of the baptized? They are assuredly neither wholly bad, nor wholly good; they are neither bad enough for hell, nor good enough for heaven. Now how can you adapt your theory to this state of things, which is, I think, quite impossible to deny? Look around you, survey the mass of mankind: of how few, how very few, can you affirm that they are truly devout, converted, holy, Christ-

like ; take which term you please. Can you affirm this of one in ten, in twenty, in a hundred even, of those baptized into Jesus Christ ? Take as an illustration any English parish you please. Take its entire population ; what are they, how many are the really good ? Take any village, or select some one of our English towns, muster its whole population in imagination, how many true, holy servants of Jesus Christ will you find there ? The mass—what are they ? Let us meet this question, and look the facts straight in the face. What is to be the doom of the mass of baptized Christians ; they are not holy, but are they bad ? Nobody out of the pulpit—and seldom there in these days—ventures to assert any such thing. For in truth there is abundant good in this crowd of human beings ; and still more, there is almost infinite capacity for goodness amid the evil. Everywhere you will find unselfish parents, hard workers, loving sisters, true friends ; everywhere traces, distinct enough amid all the sin, traces in abundance of goodness, kindness, patience, self-sacrifice, sometimes carried even to great lengths. Let an emergency arise, let sickness come, what devotion does it not call forth, what love unstinted, what self-forgetfulness ? Now your system, that which you call the good news brought from heaven by Jesus Christ, forces you to believe that God will consign all these hapless children of His, because unconverted in this life, to a doom which in its lightest form

is awful beyond all powers of imagination, to the company of devils for ever and ever, to darkness unbroken by a single ray of light. Permit me one question more, would not any creed, or no creed, be a positive relief from such *a gospel* as this of yours? Can there be a mockery more solemn, more emphatic, than to call this any part of the glad tidings of great joy? Is it not time for the clergy, not merely in private to ponder these things, convinced or half convinced of their truth, but to speak out as in God's name—as God's ministers?

And while I am speaking of men as they are, and of the life they lead, let me add here a statement of another very grave difficulty in the way of accepting an endless hell as the doom of any man, the issue of any life. Wherever human beings exist, in what form of community it matters not, in what climate or under what conditions of life soever, there is found everywhere a deep spontaneous belief, call it feeling, instinct, what you please, that connects the marriage tie and the birthday with joyful associations, with mirth and gladness. Now why is this—has it no meaning? So deep an instinct, one so truly natural and spontaneous as this, comes surely from the Creator of all. His voice it is that bids the bridegroom rejoice over the bride, that bids the heart of the mother overflow with tenderness towards her babe. This being so, again let me put the question, and ask, *why* has this been so

ordered ? It is God who has so ordered ; do you think He has had no purpose in so doing, no message to convey to those who have ears to hear ? Is it possible that our Heavenly Father should bid His creatures everywhere to rejoice with a special joy at the marriage feast, at the natal hour, if these births were in fact destined to add largely to the ranks of hell, to the hosts of evil ? Do think over the matter calmly, and ask yourself if that is possible, if you can believe any such thing ?

And as you think it over, take with you these words of Jesus Christ (that hint so much.) They remind us how the mother, in the " perilous birth " hath sorrow ; but add, that all that sorrow is swallowed up in joy—" joy that a man is born into the world." Dwell on these words that you may grasp all they convey. Indeed in this lies the whole matter. It is *a joy* that a man —any man—should be born into the world. See how wide the words are, if you tell me it is but a blind instinct of the mother : yes, I reply, it is this very blindness, as you call it, of the instinct that constitutes its force, for it thus betrays its origin ; it is implanted, and by whom ? by the Great Parent, for it is spontaneous and betrays His hand. Do you ask me to believe that He has done this without a meaning, without a certain purpose of good ? Can I believe that our Father bids any mother's heart to stir with joy at the sight of her infant, while He knows that this

infant is destined to be, will be, in fact, shut up into endless torment and sin ?

And again, can you reconcile your theory of endless evil awaiting so large a portion of our race with that natural thirst for joy, that longing for happiness each one finds within ? It matters not whether this has been slowly developed or created at one stroke, all that matters to this argument is its *naturalness*, its *universality*. This longing for happiness cannot then have been accidental, there must be in it a design on the Creator's part. Now, what was that design ? To delude us, is that possible ? "If the popular theory of future endless torment were true, what sublime mockery would there be in placing poor wretches first upon earth, where are heard the merry shouts of careless children, the joyous song of birds, where above our heads,

> 'With constant kindly smile the sleepless stars
> 'Keep everlasting watch,' * * *

where beneath our feet the delicate beauty of flowers of every tint gladdens the eye. What would have been thought of the propriety of placing a hundred bright and cheerful objects, suggestive of peace and happiness, in the anteroom to the torture chamber of the inquisition ? It deserves, too, to be noted that man, the only animal that laughs, has of all animals, according to the popular theory, least cause to laugh."

But there is much to be said beyond remarking on our natural thirst for joy and happiness, and the difficulty of explaining why it was ever implanted in man, except with a design that it should one day be gratified, fully and freely. There is this to be said, there is stored in every man a vast possibility of growth, of expansion, mental and intellectual, no less than spiritual. There are almost infinite germs in man, so to speak, latent as yet, but capable of a development perhaps practically boundless : they are probably unsuspected by the majority, and it is only at intervals, and as it were by chance, that we gain a passing glance at them. But undoubtedly they exist, and their existence, like that of all other natural facts, requires an explanation. *Why* do they exist—who planted within us these powers, and for what end ? And they have been given to all, not to the good merely, but to man as man. I cannot but see in the very fact of their existence a silent prophecy, an intimation that the spark shall not be quenched in any case. Are they not a very message to man from God, a *hint*, eloquent by its very silence, eloquent, and instinct with hope ?

Consider next how strongly the analogy of nature, which is, after all, a very real revelation of God, bears against the popular view, which limits to the few moments of our present life all our chances of discipline, amendment, and probation ; and that though "all reason, all

experience, all scripture unite in this, that the Divine work of teaching goes on behind, as well as before, the veil." To teach that the mere fact of dying is the signal for a total change from all that has gone before, is to contradict all that we know of God's ways from analogy. Consider this, and say whether any view which interposes so wide a gulf, as that commonly held does, between our present and our future life can be true. In all God's dealings with us no sharp break intervenes between the successive stages of life: each condition of being is developed out of a prior and closely related stage. Now this being so, can I believe that in another age all this is reversed, and that men, with capacities for good still existing, are to be at one bound consigned to outer darkness, to hopeless sin, to endless torture? And the difficulty (surely an enormous one) of believing that our Father will deliberately crush out all the lingering tendencies to good in His own children, is increased by the following consideration, viz.:—that the whole of our human life here is so manifestly incomplete, that in very many cases it has not afforded a satisfactory time of training, and in not a few cases no training at all.

This thought may be pursued further thus: An old proverb says very wisely, "the mills of God grind *slowly*," and this Divine slowness, or long suffering is very conspicuous in God's ways. How slowly has He been fitting this earth for

man's habitation, and by what a long continued succession of stages, age succeeding age. At length man steps on the earth. Now, is all the Divine slowness to be at once changed—and why should it be? Man is to live for ever and ever: we are apt to forget what this means, and how altogether impossible it is to assign any proportion between the fleeting moments of earthly life, and the eternity that stretches away for ever and ever. If we compare a human life of average duration to one second of time, and compare eternity to the aggregate of all the seconds that have passed since time was, and that shall pass while time endures, still we assign to human life a proportionate duration infinitely too long. Am I then to believe that the same God who expends millions of years in slowly fitting this earth for man's habitation, will only allow to man himself a few fleeting years, or months, or hours, as it may be, as his sole preparation time for eternity? To settle questions so unspeakably great in their issue; questions stretching away to a horizon so far distant that no power of thought can follow them in such hot haste, does seem quite at variance with our heavenly Father's ways, with all He has shewn us of His modes of acting. Besides, do but look at the world: far the larger part of its population has not even heard of Jesus Christ. Are they—these untold myriads of myriads of hapless creatures—first to hear of Christ at the Day of Judgment? And as I pass, let me say a few words on a law which science

has certainly established as a factor in building up the order of things, *e.g.*, the survival of the fittest, the final victory of the strongest. Its bearing on the larger hope is evident when we extend it to the moral order. For what is fit morally, and what unfit? Evil is unfit—Goodness is, in the highest sense, fit. But if so, we upset the traditional dualism. For that asserts virtually that corruption is as strong as purity, vice as godliness, the powers of evil as the powers of good.

Finally, we pass to Holy Scripture. Here we are at once confronted by a difficulty so grave, that I confess it seems to me quite decisive against the popular view. This difficulty is, that you are thus forced absolutely to *suppress* a very large part of the Bible—a very numerous class of passages which clearly hold out a promise of universal restitution, or at least imply a distinct hope for all men. The view generally held is, in short, one-sided, and therefore wholly unfair; it is as though a judge should base a decision of the most weighty importance on one set of witnesses merely, neglecting the others who testify in a directly opposite sense. "Only imagine the book of nature being studied in this way, with one class of facts systematically ignored; with one law, say of gravitation, fully laid down, while the opposite law of centrifugal motion was altogether overlooked, what results in science could follow from such a method?

Yet this is the way in which not a few yet read the Scriptures, taking their first partial sense readings for the truth, and shutting their eyes to all that the same Scripture testifies on the other side."

An interesting illustration of the fact that the New Testament is full of passages teaching the larger hope, is furnished by the undoubted, but often unperceived, occurrence over and over again, in the works of those who hold the popular creed, of language which, if fairly understood, involves the salvation of all men. This no doubt arises from the fact that phrases are used freely, while a traditional creed does, as so often, blind men to the real force of the expressions they employ—blind them in fact to everything outside the line of thought which they are taught to believe constitutes the truth. Perhaps the best illustration that can be given of what I mean will be gained by quoting from some collection of popular hymns. I take, then, the well-known Hymns, *Ancient and Modern*, and quote a few passages as instances of my meaning. Hymn 45 has this verse :—

> "Thou, sorrowing at the helpless cry,
> Of all creation doomed to die,
> Did'st save our lost and guilty race."

But this is universal salvation : the race of man saved, if words have any meaning. And this thought—the race saved—finds frequent expression elsewhere in these hymns ; nor let any man

who regards honesty of speech, and common truthfulness, say that to offer salvation merely, is, or can be, the same thing as to save. See hymns 56, v. 3, 4, 5, 6 ; 57, v. 3 ; 62, v. 2, 6 ; 200, v. 6, &c. Again, listen to these solemn words and tell me what they mean : hymn 97, Part 2, v. 2 :—

> "Precious flood which all creation
> From the stain of sin hath freed."

And again, v. 5 :—

> "That a shipwrecked race for ever
> Might a port of refuge gain."

And hymn 103, v. 5 :—

> "So a ransomed world shall ever
> Praise Thee, its redeeming Lord."

Can it be right to talk of a ransomed world for ever praising its Redeemer, and yet to mean that all the time the world is not actually ransomed, and perhaps half, perhaps more, of its population are groaning in endless pain ? Is this consistent with truth ? Again, other hymns call on all creation to sing God's praise. Shall this praise then echo from hell ? I might well quote, in proof of this address to all creation to praise God, the familiar doxology, but I will only notice here a well known hymn :—

> "O day for which creation
> And all its tribes were made ;
> O joy for all its former woes,
> A thousand times repaid."

I will simply ask what these words mean : all creation is to have all its woes a thousand times repaid : if this is not universalism, what is

universalism? Again, over and over, Christ is said to have vanquished sin, death, and Satan :— hymns 147, v. 2; 148, v. 2; 196, v. 3, &c. But how can this be true on the traditional creed? To say that sin is vanquished, and death and Satan, while hell receives its myriads of the lost, is worse than absurd; *e.g.*, take this line from hymn No. 196 :—

"Death of death, and hell's destruction,"

and say if the universalist's creed could be more distinctly stated: his utmost hopes have never gone beyond a vision of death abolished, and hell destroyed? To pursue this further is needless, though it would be easy, and indeed full of interest: but I may point out how significant it is to find the very opponents of the larger hope *forced*, unconsciously, to employ language directly teaching universal salvation. The explanation is simply that they have been using the words and ideas of Scripture, while the fair, honest meaning of their own words is obscured for them by the spell of a narrow traditional creed.

Before passing on, let me remark once more on the injurious moral tendency of the popular creed. Not merely has it fostered in man a spirit of cruelty (p. 46)—not alone does it promise a heaven which is one of utter selfishness (p. 49)—not merely does it point to evil as finally triumphant (p. 38) but it scatters broadcast lessons of equivocation and untruth. For if to say one thing, while meaning something

totally different, be falsehood, then with falsehood is the popular religious literature honeycombed from end to end. Everywhere it repeats that the race of man is saved, that Christ is the Saviour of mankind, while it really means that half mankind is damned. It tells us, I quote the *Record* (Easter, 1885)—how "Satan is utterly subdued," "his empire completely demolished," "his power for ever fallen." This teaching it repeats in a thousand forms, in countless hymns, in sermons, tracts, books; but it really means that Satan is triumphant, and his empire as enduring as God himself. Well may the sceptic exult, and the thoughtful Christian mourn at this duplicity, which stains our religious literature this terrible perversion, in the holiest matters, of those words by which we shall be judged.

Again, there are, apart from all these passages, certain tendencies in the Gospel, whose drift and character are impossible to mistake. That these tendencies exist I am far more certain than I can be of the meaning of any number of highly figurative texts. Now these tendencies are too clear, too broad, too distinct, to be considered accidental. So far from being a product of the age in which the New Testament was written, they are in conflict with the spirit of that age, and in advance of it. They must therefore represent something inherent in the Author of Christianity, and something essential to His

design. I put the case very moderately in saying, how extremely difficult it is to reconcile the popular creed with these undoubted tendencies of the New Testament. Can I reasonably believe that a system which, beyond all other creeds, has been distinguished by promoting mercy, goodness, love, tenderness for body and soul ; a system, of which these qualities are the very essence, does indeed teach a doctrine of punishment so shocking, so horrible, that if really believed, it would turn this earth into a charnel-house, and spread over all nature lamentation, mourning, and woe ?

Let me next shew that certain great principles of Revelation conflict with the popular creed. "I am sure," says a thoughtful writer, "these are the two fundamental features of the Christian Revelation, of which all its utterances are the manifold expression, viz. :—1.—The parental love of the Father. 2.—The solidarity of mankind to be conformed to the image of His Son." —*Letters from a Mystic.* 1.—No one can deny that the New Testament contains a special revelation of the parental tie uniting us to God. When we pray and say, "our Father," these two words convey the spirit of the whole Gospel. Now, it is not too much to assert that the view generally held is an absolute negation of all that the parental tie implies. It robs the relation of all meaning. It reduces to a simple mockery the divine Fatherhood, though that is of the very essence of Christianity. What, for instance, shall

we say of such a Father's appeal to those who, as He knows, will never hear? To Him there is no future—all is present; the "lost" are lost, and yet He calls them; they are, on the traditional creed, virtually damned; and He knows it, and yet invites them to come and be saved. But all this difficulty comes from uniting two things absolutely irreconcilable—endless love and power, and yet endless evil. If we want to retain endless sin, let us return to the God of Calvin: nowhere else shall we find solid footing. This God at least is Lord and Master. He issues no invitations, knowing them to be in fact futile. He saves all whom He wants to save. His will must prevail. His Son sheds no drop of blood in vain. All for whom He dies are in fact saved. All this is hard—nay, cruel; but it is at least logical, intelligible. Contrast with this system the flabby creed of our pseudo-orthodoxy. Long ago it was shrewdly said by an old Calvinist, "universal salvation is credible, if universal redemption be true." For it shocks the reason to be told of a universal redemption, when all that is meant is *an attempt* at the redemption of all, which wholly fails; it shocks the reason no less to be told of an unchanging love which wholly ceases the moment the last breath leaves the frail body.

I repeat, the essence of Christianity perishes in the virtual denial of any true fatherhood of our race on God's part. Follow out this thought,

for it is of primary importance. We lose sight of the value of the individual soul when dealing with the countless millions who have peopled this earth and passed away. What is one among so many ? we are tempted to say, forgetting that the value of each human being is not in the least thereby altered. Each soul is of infinite value, as if it stood alone, in the eyes of God its Father. And more than this, are we not altogether apt to forget another vital point, to forget whose the loss is, if any one soul perishes ? it is the man's own loss, says our popular creed. But is this all ? No, a thousand times no ! It is God's loss : it is the Father who loses His child. The straying sheep of the parable is the Great Shepherd's loss : the missing coin is the owner's loss. In this very fact lies the pledge that He will seek on and on till He find it. For only think of the value He sets on each soul. He has stamped each with His own image : has conferred on each a share of His own immortality—of Himself : do but realize these things ; put them into plain words till you come thoroughly to believe them ; and you must see how impossible it becomes to credit that unworthy theology, which tells you that such a Father can ever let perish the work of His own fingers, His own offspring. One step further to make this clearer : how has He shown His sense of the value of the human spirit ? The Incarnation must say. It is human life taken into closest alliance with the divine—man and God meeting in the God-man.

And then follows the Atonement, proof on proof of the same truth, when He tasted death for every man, He in whose death all died. Such is the chain, whose golden links I have been endeavouring to follow and trace, whose links bind to the Father above every human soul; *every human soul*, be it distinctly affirmed. Or stay, is there not yet wanting the final link to complete this chain? It is to be found in the great truth, which completes what I have been saying; the truth of the oneness of the human race, its organic unity. Let us consider this.

2. The principle of the organic unity of our race is that which underlies the whole divine work, alike in Creation and in the Incarnation. It is the divine idea, so to speak, to regard humanity as one organic whole, one body summed up in Adam, summed up anew in the second Adam—a whole which must stand or fall together. All this, too, is very legible in the divinely-given symbolism of the old law, and is reflected in the gospel with perfect clearness. What but this is the teaching of the "first fruits," and the "first born" in Scripture? These imply and include, the one, the whole harvest; the other, the whole family, and not less. Now Christ is the "first fruits."—1 *Cor.* xv. 23, and Christ is the "first born."—*Col.* i. 18. And what follows let St. Paul say, "If the 'first-fruits' be holy, the 'lump' is also holy," the whole race. Thus this principle is affirmed in the great central doctrine of the

Incarnation. For in Christ the "first fruits," mankind, *i.e.*, the aggregate of humanity, is taken into God. And so in His death all died, as the New Testament assures us, and in His resurrection all rise, nay, are risen. In other words, Christ's relation, as the second Adam, is not to individuals, but to the race. Further, it is an actual, not a possible or a potential relation, an actual relation giving salvation to all. "Once introduce the belief in Christ's divine nature, and His death and resurrection are no longer of the individual, but of the race. It was on this belief the Church was founded and built up. The belief was not indeed drawn out with exact precision, yet it was always implied in the relation, which the believer was supposed to hold toward God. The formula of Baptism, which has never changed, is unintelligible without it. The Eucharist is emptied of the blessing which every age has sought in that Holy Sacrament, if it be taken away. If Christ took our nature upon Him, as we believe, by an act of love, it was not that of one, but of all. He was not one man only among men, but in Him *all humanity are gathered up*: and thus now as at all time, *mankind* are, so to speak, *organically united with him.*"—WESTCOTT, *Gospel of the Resurrection.* And this union of the race of man with Himself, it is that Jesus Christ would teach in one of His many pregnant hints, by always speaking of Himself in His redeeming work as the Son, not of the Jew, not of the Gentile, not of Mary, not of the carpenter, but the Son of Man.

Yes, the organic unity of mankind is a principle that from the Fall to the story of the Incarnation, runs through the texture of Holy Scripture. Have you ever quietly thought over the very strange fact of what is called original sin? Have you asked yourself what it means, that you are suffering for something done thousands of years before your birth? All the questions raised by this enquiry we need not try to settle, but we may say that it means at least this, that in the divine plan the race falls and rises together; that mankind is not a collection of separate units, but an organised whole. Each individual is not, so to speak, complete in himself, but is a living stone in the great building—is so truly a member of one great body that, if withdrawn, there would ensue no less than a mutilation of the body. And so Adam's sin sent a shock through the whole race, exactly as when a hurt to any part sends a shock through our present body. This is the painful side, but it is only one side; and unfortunately the popular creed, as so often, persists in looking at one side only, and that the dark side, and in looking away from the bright side, or at least in so looking at it, as to miss its real aspect. But here the New Testament comes to our rescue and assures us that "as in Adam all die, so in the second Adam all shall be made alive." The race is fallen; true, but the race is risen; quite as true. Both facts strictly correspond;

> "Of two such lessons why forget
> The nobler and the Christlier one?"

A partial salvation is thus in absolute conflict with this fundamental principle which the Fall affirms, and to which the Incarnation testifies; the organic indivisible unity of mankind. A partial salvation is no less in direct opposition to the great truth put by St. Paul so clearly: "If through the offence of one (the) many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift of grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto (the) many * * as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."—*Rom.* v. Observe, the offence is a thing actually imparted to, actually staining, ruining all men. And Jesus Christ came to bring to every man, to humanity, a salvation which shall be to mankind MUCH MORE than the Fall. But the popular view reads MUCH LESS; and in millions of cases, as much less as hell is less than heaven. I may in passing point out the tendency of modern scientific thought towards the conception of a unity underlying all the various forms of life. The facts of evolution and the facts of heredity confirm this. Individual responsibility is not the less true, because it requires to be supplemented by another fact, that of organic unity. Individuality does not contradict, but is complementary to solidarity. Truth lies in balancing these opposing, but not conflicting, facts. The

individual is a whole; but the race is a whole as truly. The individual is truly free and responsible, and yet truly bound by those myriad ties of inherited capacity and character that link each inseparably to the whole. We are[3] "members one of another" in the fullest sense, *i.e.*, parts of a whole from which no act of will can sever us. This far reaching conception of a unity of the race-rooted in God's essence is St. Paul's too, *e.g.*, where he bases (1 *Tim.* ii. 4—5) universal salvation not on God's love, but on God's *unity*.

But again, the traditional view conflicts with another great principle, viz., the unchangeableness of God. "If God be unchangeable, then what we see of Him at any moment, must be true of Him at every moment of time; true of Him also both before and after all the moments of time; always and for ever true of Him. If His purpose be to save mankind, that purpose stands firm for ever, unaffected by man's sin, unshaken by the fact of death, unaltered and unalterable by men, by angels, by aught conceivable."—*Salv.Mundi.* Redemption is no after-thought, it was planned in the full knowledge of all the extent of man's sin: knowing all, God declared his purpose to be to save the race. Redemption, then, is something indefeasible, except indeed God can change, or man be stronger than God, or the will of the created stronger than the will of

the Creator. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance."—*Rom.* xi. 29. That is, what God gives cannot be refused, whom God calls, they must be saved. And this unchangeable purpose of God is stated afresh in the words that describe Jesus Christ as "*the same* yesterday, to-day, and for ever" (for the ages)—words deeply significant, and yet, whose true teaching so very often escapes attention.

And here let me close this part of my argument by introducing a story, for whose truth I vouch, to show how practical these considerations really are. In a certain quarter of London, one of the many evangelists, employed for that purpose, had gone forth to preach to the people. When he had concluded an eloquent address, he was thus accosted by one of his hearers: "Sir," said the man, "may I ask you one or two questions?" "Surely," said the preacher. "You have told us that God's love for us is very great and very strong." "Yes." "That He sent His Son on purpose to save us, and that I may be saved this moment, if I will." "Yes." "But, that if I go away without an immediate acceptance of this offer, and if, a few minutes after I were to be by any accident killed on my way home, I should find myself in hell for ever and ever." "Yes." "Then," said the man, "if so, I don't want to have anything to do with a Being

whose love for me can change so completely in five minutes."

"God so loved the world:" has He ceased to love it? *If so, when?* "Love is not love that alters, where it alteration finds;" even human love, if true, never changes Yet this love is but a faint, far-off, reflection of our Father's love. God is not love and justice, or love and anger. He is love, *i.e.*, love essential. Therefore His wrath and vengeance are the ministers of His love. To say that God cannot change, is to say that His love cannot change. Hence His love being changeless, pursues the sinner to the outer darkness, and draws him thence. An earthly parent, who, being able to help, should sit unmoved, month after month, year after year, watching, but never helping, the agonies of his own offspring, is a picture more hideous than any the records of crime can furnish. What shall we say to those who heighten enormously, infinitely, all that is shocking in such a picture, until its blackest details become light itself; and then tell us that the parent in this ghastly scene is one who is love, love infinite, almighty, and our Father?

And this brings us face to face with a blunder of the traditional creed, which is radical. It talks of God's love as though that stood merely on a par with His justice, as though it were something belonging to Him which He puts on or off. It is hardly possible

to open a religious book in which this fatal error is not found; fatal, because it virtually strikes out of the Gospel its fundamental truth, *e.g.*, God IS Love. The terms are equivalent. They can be interchanged. God is not anger though He can be angry, God is not vengeance though He does avenge. These are attributes, love is essence. Therefore, God is unchangeably love. Therefore, in judgment He is love, in wrath He is love, in vengeance He is love —" love first, and last, and midst, and without end." But in fact the traditional creed knows nothing of what love really is. For love is simply the strongest thing in the universe, the most awful, the most inexorable, while the most tender. Further, when love is thus seen in its true colours, there is less than ever an excuse for the mistake still so common, which virtually places at the centre of our moral system sin and not grace. This it is which the traditional dualism has for centuries been doing, and is still doing. Doubtless retribution is a most vital truth. Universalists rejoice to admit it; nay, largely to *base* on it their system; but there is a greater truth—the truth of love. We must not, in common phrase, put the theological cart before the horse. Retribution must not come first, while love brings up the rear; nor must we put probation before education. In a word, to arrive at truth is hopeless, so long as men virtually believe in a quasi-trinity—God and the Devil, and the Will, of Man.

CHAPTER IV.

"*WHAT THE CHURCH TEACHES.*"

Quanto quis altius in antiquitate christianâ eminuit, tanto magis spem finiendorum olim cruciatuum aluit atque defendit.—*Dæder. Inst. Theol.* ii. 199.

In these pages I hope, so far as the limits of space permit, to show by abundant evidence how groundless is the widespread opinion which represents universalism as the outcome of modern sentimentality, and to establish clearly (1) That it prevailed very widely in the primitive church, especially in the earliest centuries. (2.) That those who believed and taught it, more or less openly, or held kindred views, were among the most eminent and the most holy of the Christian Fathers. (3.) That it not only has never been condemned by the Church, but is, far more than any other view, in harmony with the ancient Catholic Creeds. (4.) That in our Prayer Book are not a few passages, which shew a distinct leaning towards universalism. Such an enquiry seems indispensable, not alone because to many minds the Fathers speak with special weight, as a link connecting us with the Apostolic age, and preserving Apostolic tradition; but on grounds common to every serious student. For all such will surely admit that in dealing with a historic faith like Christianity, its doctrines cannot be

adequately treated, except when viewed from the standpoint of history, as well as of the moral sense, and of Holy Scripture.

The period into which I propose to enquire will fall naturally into three divisions—(1.) Down to the opening years of the 4th century. (2.) Thence during the Church's "Augustan era," to the year 430 or 440 A.D. (3.) From that period to the 11th or 12th century. The two earlier periods may be said to include all that is of most value and originality in patristic literature. These centuries are especially characterised by the preponderance of the Eastern theologians. All the early influences that moulded Christian thought are of the East, and not of the West. The language hallowed by the New Testament continued for several centuries the language of theology. The great councils that fixed the Creed of the Church were all held in the East, and there, too, were the early schools of theology—centres of Christian light and learning. Not only what is Roman, but in a wider sense what is Latin, counted at first as almost nothing in the theological scale, till the fatal genius of an African turned the balance, and the dark shadow of S. Augustine's cruel and novel theology fell as a blight on the whole Western Church.

Before we can hope to understand the Fathers, we must try to place ourselves mentally where they stood. In a peculiar sense the Church was militant in the early centuries. It was engaged

in a struggle for life or death with a paganism at once indescribably foul, and cruel. Under such circumstances to teach universalism required a faith almost superhuman. It must have seemed to many in that age almost an act of treason to the Cross to teach that, though dying unrepentant, the bitter persecutor, or the votary of abominable lusts, should yet in the ages to come find salvation. Such considerations help us to see the extreme weight attaching even to the very least expression in the Fathers, which involves sympathy with the larger hope. Especially so when we consider that the idea of mercy was then but little known; and still more that truth, as we conceive it, was not then esteemed a duty.

I am aware that it will be said that patristic teaching is often not consistent on the question of the larger hope. This inconsistency, it may be confidently said in reply, is largely apparent only, and due to the use of ambiguous phrases which are misunderstood. And where it is real, it is amply accounted for by the remarkable doctrine of Reserve. These two propositions I hope to establish clearly, taking the latter first. It is the fashion to confine the doctrine of Reserve to the duty of suppressing a truth deemed inexpedient to disclose. I am prepared to shew by the Fathers' own words that it went very much further, *e.g.*, to the advocacy of falsehood as a distinct duty, when the supposed interests of piety were at stake.

In considering this doctrine, we must remember that the principle of a so-called *fraus pia* pervaded the whole legislation of antiquity. So great a teacher as PLATO regarded falsehood as a kind of moral medicine. Thence this teaching passed to Philo; thence in turn to Alexandria, the birthplace of theology. The fruits of such teaching are only too apparent in the early centuries. A swarm of apocryphal Gospels and forged writings appear; fraudulent Oracles, Acts and Canons of Councils, Gospels, Legends abound. Writings were interpolated, glossed, mutilated, even wholly forged. "For a good end," says a very eminent scholar (speaking of the *innocent* primitive times), "they made no great scruple *to forge whole books.*"—Dallæus, *De usu Pat.* CASAUBON speaks very strongly of the number of these early Christian forgeries in a passage printed p. 174, in a note. Of the 4th century MOSHEIM says, an error, almost publicly adopted, was "that to *deceive and lie is a virtue*, when religion can be promoted by it."—*Eccles. hist.* i. 357, words that not unfairly describe the teaching prevalent in the early centuries. Thus EPIPHANIUS tells us that Catholics blotted out from S. Luke's Gospel a statement "that Jesus wept."—*Ancor.* I cite this story (which may not be true), as clear proof that Catholics were thought capable of so doing. At Carthage, 419 A.D., FAUSTINUS tendered the Canons of Sardica as though genuine Canons of the Council of Nice. Only thirty years later LEO attempted the same fraud.

CASSIAN, a friend of CHRYSOSTOM, is author of a collection of spiritual precepts; one of his chapters bears this striking heading: "Even the Apostles teach us that falsehood is very often permissible, and the truth hurtful." S. CHRYSOSTOM openly advocates deceit *(apate)* as a spiritual medicine.—*De sacer. lib.* i., ii. He also maintains that S. PETER and S. PAUL were merely dissembling in the scene recorded in Galatians (ch. ii.) And this was the common opinion since ORIGEN'S time, and is asserted by S. JEROME very earnestly. He even says, writing to AUGUSTINE, "Tu veritatis tuæ saltem *unum adstipulatorem* proferre debebis."—*Ep.* lxxxix. Yet what is this but to attribute a lie to the Apostle, and a partnership in lying to the Spirit of inspiration? Nor is this strange, for several Fathers do not hesitate to attribute dissimulation to our Lord Himself; *e.g.*, the author of ninety-two sermons found in some editions of S. AMBROSE (possibly MAXIMUS of Turin, 422, A.D.), says of CHRIST, "sitire se simulat."—*Ser.* xxx. Compare a striking passage in an old writer—*De sanc. Trin.* (in S. CHRYSOSTOM'S works). S. GREGORY, of Nyssa, remarks that our Lord used deceit for purposes of salvation.—*Cat. or* xxvi. S. HILARY asserts that CHRIST in saying He was ignorant of that day, was not in fact ignorant of it.—*De Trin.* ix. S. AMBROSE says, "Neque fallitur Pater neque fallit Filius, verum ea est in Scripturis consuetudo .. ut Deus dissimulet se scire quod novit. Et in hoc ergo unitas divini-

tatis in Patre . . probatur et Filio, si quemadmodum Deus Pater cognita *dissimulat*, ita Filius, etiam in hoc imago Dei, que sibi sunt nota *dissimulet*." —*De fide* v. viii. S. BASIL teaches that CHRIST pretends ignorance.—*Ep.* viii. *c.* vi.

Those desiring further information may consult S. GREGORY, of Nazianzus—*Orat.* xxxvi. and xxxix.; RUFINUS —*In sym. Apos.*; S. BASIL—*Cont. Eun.* iv., 7, 8; S. ZENO—*Lib.* i. 15, and ii. 8; DIONYSIUS of Alexandria—*On S. Luke* xxii.; VICTORINUS—*De Phys. lib.* xxiii.-vi.; PROCLUS—*Or* xiii. *In san. Pasch.*; S. LEO—*In Nat. Dom. Ser* ii., *De Pass. Dom. Ser.* xi.; MAXIMUS—*Quest. et. dub.* lxvi.; S. CLEMENT, of Alexandria—*Strom.* vi.; see also HUET—*Orig.* ii. *prop. fin.* and lib. iii. 2; DODWELL—*De pauc. mart.* xiii.; MILMAN—*Hist. of Christ.* iii. p. 358; NEANDER—*Eccl. hist.* vi. 325; CAVE — *Hist. liter., On S. John Damascene*; GIESELER—*Eccles. hist.* i. 298; *ed. Philad.* 1836. In fact the evidence seems clearly to show that dissimulation was regarded as perfectly legitimate, and even as a duty, when (as in the case of the larger hope), the good of others seemed to require it. I am not for a moment charging the Fathers with a general advocacy of lying. I am but stating, in their own words, the limits they set to the duty of truth in one particular direction, and *in that only*.

Finally, let me place side by side the two following views of this doctrine:—

S. HILARY.

Commenting on *Ps.* xv. 2, "And speaketh the truth in his heart," this Father, after enforcing the duty of truth, proceeds thus: "But this is difficult by reason of the sins and vices of the age. For *a lie is very often necessary. (Est enim necessarium plerumque mendacium)*, and *sometimes falsehood is useful*; as when we tell a lie to an assassin lying in wait, or upset evidence on behalf of one who is in danger, or deceive a sick man as to the difficulty of cure."

DR. PUSEY.

"The principle of accommodation was that of our Lord. "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now" . . its limit was in not declaring as yet all the truth on a given subject, *never in saying what was untrue*." —"*What is of faith as to everlasting punishment.*"—p. 250.

[*The italics are mine.*]

Dr. Pusey's book is so often quoted by those who do not read the Fathers, that a striking instance of the way he has done his work will be useful. I might add much more, but forbear, desiring no controversy with an honoured name.

I turn next to shew the wholly inconclusive nature of the arguments drawn from the patristic use of such phrases as *aionios*, *eternus*, &c., when applied to future punishment. And first we should remember what our own experience amply teaches. Almost every conversation we take part in, every book we read, offers ample proof that such terms as "for ever," "eternal," "ceaseless," &c., are habitually used in a purely conventional sense, without so much as a thought of absolute endlessness. And this is more true of the Fathers, whose training was largely rhetorical; whose whole habit of mind was totally unscientific. To come to definite proofs: just as the prophet calls that incurable, of which in a moment after he asserts the cure—*Jer.* xxx., 12, 17, just so do the Fathers often employ, in a limited sense, words that seem to assert the opposite. Thus S. Jerome, commenting on *Zephan.* ii. 9, explains the *eternal* desolation of Amon as ending in their conversion. See, too, his comment to the same effect on *Ezek.* xxv. 4. Of Jerusalem, he says in *Ez.* xxiv., that the city was burnt with *eternal* fire by Hadrian. He says Israel is delivered over to *eternal* woe. —*In Amos* viii.: a flame is kindled against them

which shall not be quenched (*in Jer.* vii. 20); yet he asserts repeatedly the final salvation of Israel —*In Hos.* xiii., *in Zeph.* iii., *in Ezek.* xxxix., xxi., xxxv., &c. Again, he says that Edom is to be banished to *eternal* desolation.—*In Ezek.* xxxv., that Edom and the host of Egypt are to lie (slain) in a *perpetual* sleep.—*In Ezek.* xxxii.: Yet Edom is to be finally converted. —*In Obad.* i.: And Egypt is represented as restored and converted.—*In Ezek.* xxix. I might quote further from S. Jerome, but pass on.

Next, let us take S. Ambrose: He says— Christ freed the dead from *perpetual* chains. —*In Ps.* xlv.: And he very strikingly teaches deliverance from *the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels*, for he says that Dives is to be set free.—*In Ps.* cxviii: And teaches distinctly that Dives was *in this very fire—ib.* v. 17. Pamphilus, in his Apology, uses *apeiros*, and Rufinus *immensus* and *infinitus* of temporary duration. So does Theodoret use *aionios* more than once, *e.g.*, *in Jer.* xxiii.: and S. Gregory, of Nazianzus, ceaseless (*apaustos*).—*Adv. Jul. Or.* ix. So does S. Chrysostom term *incurable* what may be cured.—*In Ps.* cxliv., and *De cruc et lat*: And calls perpetual (*dienekes*) what is temporary.— *In Heb.* ii., and *in Eph.* iv.: He also calls the fire which destroyed Sodom (the *eternal* fire of S. Jude) beneficial.—In *Ps.* cx. Similar phrases occur in the antient homilies printed in most editions of this Father, *e.g.*, the sleepless

(undying) worm is said to die.—*In trid. res.*, and the *eternal* bonds are opened.—*In Ascen. Dom.* Again the Sibylline books teach the transient character of the *unquenchable* fire, for all pass through it ; the just to be cleansed, the unjust to be finally saved.—*Lib.* ii. 255. S. Jerome, too, speaks of the fire of hell (Gehenna) as *cleansing.* —*In Nahum* iii. 13). And S. Gregory, of Nyssa, describes the *eternal* fire as temporary and healing.—*De an. et. res.* So the old commentator on the Psalms (in S. Jerome's works), says the *eternal blotting out of* the wicked is their conversion.—*In Ps.* ix. 5 : Another old writer (in S. Jerome) teaches that the *eternal* night of Hades lasts only till Christ's descent.—*Ep.* xxix.

These considerations alone seem to dispose of the great majority of passages quoted by Dr. Pusey, as proof that the Fathers teach endless penalty. They no less apply to any similar expressions, that may be brought forward from those Fathers I am about to claim as universalists. And if any passages remain, that seem too positive to admit of this explanation, I point at once to the doctrine of Reserve, which quite distinctly authorised dissimulation, and specially applied to such questions as the larger hope. And this is to state the case moderately and to refrain from pressing this doctrine, to its legitimate bounds. For plainly, any one holding it may *continuously deny universalism, and yet secretly believe it.* But I merely apply it to cases

of so-called inconsistency, *i.e.*, where the larger hope is apparently at once held, and yet contradicted by the same Fathers. Such I claim as universalists, because no other view can possibly explain all the facts. Therefore I venture to lay down this simple rule as the fair test of the Fathers' real meaning, viz., that *no hypothesis other than strong conviction of its truth can account for universalistic teaching;* while the desire to terrify sinners, added to the ambiguous character of most or all of the terms they employ; and lastly, the doctrine of Reserve, easily account for apparent, or even real, inconsistency which we find in the Fathers.

I may sum up by saying that the method usually employed in case of these writers, seems to violate every rule of fair criticism. Practically it takes account of but a single factor in their writings, and misunderstands that; *e.g.*, if *aionios*, or kindred terms, are applied to future punishment, such a writer is at once labelled as teaching endless sin and pain. (I.) But this is to assume that such terms are used in a strict and extreme sense, which, as we have seen, is certainly not (necessarily) the case; (II.) to ignore the purely conventional use of these epithets; (III.) to ignore the highly significant doctrine of Reserve (IV.); and it is no less to ignore the great mass of evidence, direct and indirect, in so many Fathers, which admits of no explanation other than sympathy with, or belief in the larger hope.

This I shall now adduce; premising that evidence abundant enough to fill a volume must, I fear, suffer in cogency when compressed into a few pages. The quotations I shall make will fall under these heads—(*a*), shewing a drift and tone of thought totally out of harmony with the perpetuity of evil; (*b*), involving the larger hope by fair inference; (*c*), or by direct statement; (*d*), at times teaching the restoration of every fallen spirit.

The epistle of the Pseudo-Barnabas, 120 A.D., bears no very clear testimony. Perhaps the most decisive passage is that in which he says, (*c.* xxi.), that "the wicked shall perish with the wicked one," meaning apparently the cessation of existence. There are also passages in the Ignatian epistles—*Ad Smyr. c.* vii.: *Ad Trall.* ix. —and in S. Polycarp—*Ad Phil. c.* ii. *&* v.— that seem to indicate that they expected a resurrection of the just only. Here, then, it is well to note a fact, which it seems to me vain to deny, viz., that some very early writers appear to have held the final annihilation of the wicked. This is perhaps the teaching of Hermas—*Lib.* iii. vi. *11 —3:* viii. *54, 59, 63, 8, 9:* ix. *172, 9, 191, &c.*; and of the *Acts of Paul and Thecla, ch.* ix. Justin Martyr also probably takes this view; for though his language is hardly consistent, yet the terms applied by him to the lot of the wicked, seem on the whole to imply their final extinction. I may quote—*Dial, ch.* v.

(*see too ch.* vi.) "Some which have appeared worthy of God never die, others are punished so long as God wills them to exist." "Wicked angels and demons and men shall cease to exist."—*2nd Apol. ch.* vii. A fragment, No. xi., attributed to Justin, and certainly very antient, seems to teach the same. The epistle to Diognetus (whose genuineness has, however, been recently impeached), seems to take this same view.—See *ch.* x. Irenæus, too, 167 A.D., may probably be quoted as an advocate of the annihilation of the wicked. His idea is that immortality is solely due to God's grace, that "continuance for ever and ever" belongs only to the saved, and that the wicked "shall not receive length of days for ever and ever."—*Adv. hær. lib.* ii., 34; also iii., 18. Arnobius, 303 A.D., is the latest writer whom I can name as holding similar opinions. He speaks at length on this subject. —*Adv. gent.* ii. *14*, *9*, *31*, *6*, *53*, *61*, *66*. The soul is, according to him, of intermediate quality, *i.e.*, not naturally immortal, yet capable of immortality by God's grace, cut off from which it perishes absolutely. This phase of opinion, though short-lived, and confined to but few writers, is of interest, because appearing at such an early date; and because it affords fresh and distinct evidence of the very slender claims, which the dogma of endless evil has to being the genuine representative of primitive teaching.*

*"In respect to the end of the world, opinions varied between annihilation and reformation. Most of the Fathers seem to have held to the latter view."—HAGEN, *Hist. of doctrines. i.*, *224*.

I now turn to the task of adducing a portion, and it can only be a portion (on account of my limited space), of the mass of evidence which exists, both direct and indirect, in favour of primitive universalism. Our first class of proofs shall be drawn from the very remarkable doctrine of Christ's Descent into Hades. The number of texts alleged in proof of this was very large, *e.g.*, from the Old Testament were quoted *Is.* ix. 2; xlv. 2, 3; xlix. 9, 25; *Zech.* ix. 11—2; *Ps.* lxviii. 18; lxix. 33; cvii. 16. From the New Testament, not only S. Peter's famous statement, 1. Pet. iii. 21, but *S. Matt.* xii. 29; *Phil.* ii. 9, 10; *Col.* ii. 15; *Eph.* iv. 8, 9, were alleged. Very striking is the contrast between the universal acceptance of this doctrine in primitive days, and its universal* disregard in our days. Very instructive, too, is this contrast; for, doubtless, the explanation is, that the Gospel preached to the dead, and still more to those who were in life *disobedient* to direct preaching, was felt instinctively to strike a blow fatal to the traditional creed. To us this doctrine is thus of the highest interest; the more so when we regard the wide-spread belief of antiquity in the liberation from Hades† of ALL SOULS by Christ. It is surely impossible to deny that this involves universalism as a necessary conclusion. For if

* For although adopted by nearly all commentators, it has never passed into the current theology of the day.

† Both Jews and early Christians seem to have taught that the spirits of the departed were in one common abode (*Sheol—Hades—apud inferos*), though with separate regions for the just and unjust.

all, without any exception, were delivered by the preaching of Jesus Christ; then, as an eminent writer has tersely put the case, "it argues absolute *fatuity* to suppose that those who lived after the Incarnation can be worse off than if they had lived before it." I do not mean that this view was everywhere held, nor do I mean that all the writers holding it were themselves universalists. It is enough for our argument to shew that the doctrine so held does involve universalism as its inevitable consequence. A very early statement of this doctrine is that of the Gospel of NICODEMUS (assigned on good authority to the second century). "Of course, to us, this fiction speaks with an authority no greater than that of the Pilgrim's Progress. But just as from BUNYAN'S great allegory we might very safely infer what the Puritan conception of the Christian life was in the seventeenth century, so from this Gospel of Nicodemus, we may very safely infer what conception the Christians of the second century formed of CHRIST'S descent into Hades." The story is told dramatically. A great voice echoes through Hades, crying, "Lift up your heads, ye gates, and the King of glory shall come in." Immediately the brazen gates are shattered, and *all* those bound come out; and Hades (personified) exclaims, "*Not one* of the dead has been left in me." Jesus then turns to ADAM, extending His right hand and raising him. Then to the rest He says, "Come *all* with me, as many as have died through the tree which

he (ADAM) touched, for behold I raise you *all* up through the tree of the Cross."* We may note also that the antient (so-called) *Acts of the Apostle* THOMAS address CHRIST as the "Saviour of every creature. . . Thou who wentest down even to Hades and didst bring out thence those shut in for many ages." A statement, perhaps even earlier, of the same fact is given by EUSEBIUS, as found by him at Edessa, in the archives, to the effect that CHRIST had descended into Hades . . and brought up the dead with HIM. I quote next from an interesting homily, probably by EUSEBIUS of Alexandria, 289 A.D. He supposes that John the Baptist† announced in Hades the descent of CHRIST. To the dead who flock around him John says, "CHRIST will descend in order that *all*, both on earth and in heaven and in Hades, may obtain salvation from Him, and so in the name of Jesus every knee may bow."—*Hom.* xii.

EUSEBIUS of Cæsarea, 315 A.D., writes as follows: "CHRIST caring for the salvation of *all* . . and bursting the eternal gates, opened a way of return to life for the dead bound in chains of

*See also *ch.* vi., vii., *Latin* version (and a contradictory passage *ch.* ix. *2nd Latin vers*).

†This opinion is almost peculiar to Greek Fathers. Some writers teach that the Apostles also preached in Hades, *e.g.*, CLEMENT and HERMAS; some say that the BLESSED VIRGIN did the same.—ZON. *Ep.* xlii., and ANDREAS CRETENSIS.—*De dorm. Mariæ.* Some even say that SYMEON went before CHRIST to Hades.—PHOTIUS—*fide.* LEO. ALL. An old writer in EPIPHANIUS' works—*ed. Migne*, asserts the same of the archangels GABRIEL and MICHAEL.

death."—*Dem. evan.* iv. 12. To S. ATHANASIUS is ascribed a treatise (certainly very antient)—*De pass. et cruce Dom.* It says, "While the devil thought to kill one he is deprived of *all* . . cast out of Hades, and sitting by the gates, sees *all* the fettered beings led forth by the courage of the SAVIOUR." I quote next from some antient homilies—perhaps by BASIL of Seleucia—found in S. ATHANASIUS' works.—*Ed. Migne.* One of these tells how as CHRIST appears "the barriers of Hades are opened . . the dead are carried off one by one. . . In order that *nobody* should be left in Hades as a prisoner, CHRIST descends in person."—*In sanc. Pascha.* Another homily tells us that "That which happened to the visible tomb (of CHRIST—*i.e.*, its being *emptied* on His rising), the same happened to Hades the invisible."—*Hom.* iii. I take next S. HILARY, 354 A.D., who says, "CHRIST ascending on high. . captured those who had been captured by the devil."—*In Ps.* lxvii. M. F. VICTORINUS, 360 A.D., says, "The Saviour descends into Hades by that Passion of the Cross in order that He may set free *every soul.*"—*In Eph. ch.* iv. In a translation, or paraphrase, of DIDYMUS, 370 A.D.—*De Spir. Sanc.*, by S. AMBROSE, are these words: "In the liberation of *all* no one remains a captive; at the time of the Lord's Passion he alone (the Devil) was injured, who lost *all* the captives he was keeping." S. BASIL, 370 A.D., seems to teach this universal liberation, for he says the true

Shepherd brought out of the prison of Hades and handed over to the holy angels, the sheep for whom He died.—*In Ps.* xl. 14. But CHRIST died for all. S. EPHREM (Syrus), as will be seen in the note on him in this chapter, teaches the liberation of *all* from Hades. S. GREGORY of Nyssa, says, "CHRIST, while in the rest of the grave, opened for *all* the dead a resurrection from the dead."—*In Ps.* cviii. From S. GREGORY of Nazianzus, 385 A.D., I take the following: "Until CHRIST loosed by His blood *all* who groan under Tartarean chains."—*Carm.* XXXV. *v.* 9, *ed. Lyons, 1840.* In this Father's works a remarkable poem is usually printed, entitled CHRISTUS PATIENS; it is of antient, but uncertain, authorship. Speaking of CHRIST'S descent, it says: "*All* of whom (*i.e.*, the dead) thou shalt bring forth as thy spoils from Hades."—*v. 1391-2.* So again: "I believe Thou wilt bring forth from Hades as many mortals as it has imprisoned."—*ib. v. 1939.* From S. AMBROSE, 375 A.D., I take the following: "The Lord descends to the infernal world, in order that even those, who were in the infernal abodes, should be set free from their *perpetual* bonds."—*Enar. in Ps.* xliii. Here note that perpetual bonds are really temporary. Elsewhere S. AMBROSE says, "CHRIST, when amongst the dead, gave pardon to those in the infernal abodes, destroying the law of death."—*De Incar. c. v.*

Quite as emphatic is the AMBROSIASTER in his teaching. "CHRIST descending to

the infernal abodes condemned death, taking from him those whom he was keeping."—*In ep. ad Tim.* ii. "CHRIST snatched from Hades *all* . . . the Devil, together with CHRIST, lost *all* whom he was keeping."—*In Rom.* iii. My next witness shall be an early treatise (wrongly ascribed to S. AMBROSE), which says: "CHRIST went down to the *depths of Tartarus* and recalled the souls (bound by sin) to life, out of the devil's jaws." The context implies the rescue of all sinners.—*De mys: Pasch.* Next I take the words of an old writer (MAXIMUS of Turin?) whose sermons are bound in S. AMBROSE's works.—*ed. Paris, 1569.* He says: "hell *(Tartarus)* yielded up those it contains."—*Serm.* lii. S. JEROME, 378 A.D., bears clear testimony to the same effect: "Our Lord descends, and was shut up in the eternal bars, in order that He might set free *all* who had been shut up."—*In Jon.* ii. "In the blood of thy passion thou didst set free those who were being kept bound in the prison of hell *(inferni)*."—*In Zech.* ix. We may note that, in the context, S. JEROME asserts that Dives was kept in this prison; the inference being, that in his opinion, the "great gulf" may be crossed by CHRIST. Indeed, the next quotation seems to say so quite plainly. "The Lord descended to the place of punishment and torment, *in which was the rich man*, in order to liberate the prisoners."—*In Is.* xiv. 7. This liberation (of all as it seems) is taught in an old document, perhaps by CÆSARIUS

of Arles, printed in S. JEROME'S works.—*ed. Paris, 1623.* "The *eternal* night of hell (Tartarus) is illuminated as CHRIST descends . . the bonds of the damned, torn asunder, fell away . . every cry of the groaning is still. The captive souls loosed from bonds go forth from hell (Tartarus), and the Apostle's words come true, *i.e.*, in Jesus' name *every* knee bends of things in heaven, and earth, and under the earth."—*Ep.* xxix. Here note that the *eternal* night is only temporary. An old homily in EPIPHANIUS works—*Ed. Migne*, says "CHRIST, like a hawk, snatched away *all* from the devil and left him deserted." Another homily affirms that "CHRIST arose, and the prison of Hades is emptied."—*Hom.* iii.

I take next the testimony of S. CHRYSOSTOM, 398 A.D. (from whom further evidence will be quoted in the next chapter). He writes :"While the Devil imagined that he had got hold of CHRIST (in Hades), he lost *all* in fact whom he was keeping."—*In Col.* ii. In this Father's works are usually included some homilies of antient, but uncertain, authorship. Anonymous writings of this sort, of which I have already quoted a few, afford excellent proof of the beliefs then current among Christians. "The wood of the Cross recalls from Hades those who went down thither."—*In sac. Pascha.* "I see the earth trembling . . the dead preparing their escape . . JESUS CHRIST receives *all*."—*In san. et*

magn. Par. "The Lord *pretends* fear to draw on the devil, so that, attacking Him as man, he should be routed, and *all* be set free who were held captive by him."—*De sanc. Trin.* This whole description is highly characteristic and suggestive. A passage perhaps even more striking is the following: "The fire of *hell* (Gehenna) *is extinguished*, the sleepless worm (evidently the '*worm that dieth not*') *dies* . . those who were in Hades are set free from bonds." —*In trid. res.* Another witness is S. ASTERIUS, Bishop of Amasea, 401 A.D., who writes: "Death swallowed up life, and, becoming sick, vomited forth even those it had previously swallowed." — *Hom.* xix. Few Fathers have taught the deliverance of all from Hades more clearly and frequently than S. CYRIL of Alexandria, 412 A.D. "CHRIST says to the spirits in Hades, 'go forth,' despoiling the devil of *all* his wealth."—*Hom. Pasch.* iv. He describes CHRIST as "having spoiled Hades, and left the Devil there *solitary* and *deserted*."—*Hom.* vii. And again, "CHRIST, wandering down even to Hades, has *emptied* the dark, hidden, unseen treasuries."—*Glaphy.* ii. I understand MAXIMUS of Turin, 422 A.D., to teach the same: "CHRIST carried off to heaven man (mankind) whose cause He undertook, snatched from the jaws of Hades."—*In Pent. Hom.* ii. From THEODORET, 430 A.D., I take the following: CHRIST says to the Devil, "I mean to open the prison of death for the rest, but will shut up thee *only*. . Thou

wast justly despoiled of *all* thy subjects."—*De prov. Or.* x. My next quotations are from S. PETER CHRYSOLOGUS, 433 A.D.: "The rule of hell perishes . . and *all* obtain pardon?" (*constat de venia jam totum*).—*Ser.* lxxiv. "The devil's power fell, the prison of Hades was opened, the bonds of the dead (all apparently) were broken asunder."—*ib.* lxxxiv. PROCLUS, 434 A.D., Bishop of Constantinople, and S. CHRYSOSTOM'S scholar, says: "To-day CHRIST *emptied* the recesses of death."—*In laud. s. Mariæ.* "*All* the dead, wondering at his passion, cry for joy, 'we are healed by his stripes.'"—*In Dom. res.* S. LEO, 440 A.D., uses language which seems to imply that the devil lost all his captives.—*Ser.* ii., xi., xviii.

My readers can now judge of the significance rightly attaching to such a catena of authorities, comprising as it does almost all the greatest names in the first four or five centuries. Fresh evidence might very easily be given down to the tenth or eleventh century, did space permit. I am wholly unable to perceive any reasonable grounds on which the argument can be met, which regards universalism as the logical outcome of such teaching. If CHRIST delivered from Hades EVERY SOUL OF ADAM'S RACE up to the time of his Incarnation; if, *e.g.*, every murderer, if every adulterer, though dying unrepentant, were at last evangelised and saved by CHRIST, then on what grounds can it be fairly or reasonably

asserted that less mercy will be extended to that half of our race who differ in this, that by no fault of their own they were born after the Incarnation? Is salvation*—the salvation or damnation of millions of immortal spirits—a question of chronology?

Before dealing with the more direct evidence for early universalism, I may as well here notice a significant element in many Fathers' writings, *i.e.*, their attitude towards the subject of evil. Pressed by the Manichean controversy, the Fathers were forced to consider this question. Their answers to the difficulty are often very significant; they frequently prove their point, either by asserting that *all evil shall one day cease*, or else that evil is nothing. Even AUGUSTINE is forced to make admissions which seem to involve the final disappearance of evil. It is a strange sight to see the great dialectician caught in the toils he has himself set. He struggles vainly, I think, against the inevitable conclusion from his own premises, *i.e.*, the final extinction of evil. "As the spirit consents to evil it tends to what is less, and what is less tends to nothingness . . tends to absolute non-existence." "Every defect from that which is tends to *non-existence*." "Evil consists . . in tending to *non-existence*; whatever is corrupt

* Finally, those who are students of this subject may be asked to draw their own inference from the significant silence in which writers, like Dr. PUSEY, have left this branch of the question.

tends to *non-existence.*"—*De mor. Man. lib.* ii. AUGUSTINE no doubt denies the extinction of evil. My point is that his denial seems vain on his own theory. So in the dispute between ARCHELAUS and MANES, 275 A.D., it is said on the Catholic side, "that death, the prince of this world, *has an end*, as it had a beginning."—*Ch.* xxix. So an old commentator (in S. JEROME'S works), on *Rom.* viii. 20, says: "Vanity is that which at some time *comes to an end.*" And so S. AMBROSE says: "For whatever is of the devil is nothing, which cannot have any perpetuity nor substance."—*De Jacob.* S. GREGORY of Nyssa, also often asserts the non-perpetuity of evil. The passages just quoted seem conclusive against any creed which teaches the permanence of evil. I have ventured to call the traditional creed a dualism thinly disguised. Thoughtful readers will note its marked affinity with the Manichean heresy in so far as both agree in the *essential fact of teaching the perpetuity of evil.*

I will now take the more direct testimony in favour of universalism, which abounds in the writings of the Fathers. The earliest of all Christian authors, CLEMENS ROMANUS, has left us an Epistle about as long as S. MARK'S Gospel. It is significant that though he devotes three chapters to the resurrection, not a line can be quoted from him in favour of the traditional creed. This, though important, is negative evidence only, but there is a passage in RUFINUS

—*Inv. in Hier., lib.* i., *prop. fin.*—from which we may directly infer, that S. CLEMENT was a believer in the larger hope. The passage is too long to quote and discuss, but the fact of S. CLEMENT's living during the Apostolic age renders the statement important.

For many years after the Apostolic days we possess but scanty records of Christian thought, yet we are able to supply the blank indirectly. PAMPHILUS, the martyr, 294 A.D., wrote an Apology for ORIGEN, which has, alas, almost wholly perished ; but we possess very valuable information as to its contents. Two early writers, anonymous, it is true, but whose testimony there seems no reason to doubt, agree in stating that this Apology contained VERY MANY TESTIMONIES of Fathers earlier than ORIGEN, in favour of restitution (and pre-existence). — Routh, *Rell. sac.* iii. 498. Now, as ORIGEN was born about ninety years after S. JOHN'S death, these very numerous testimonies would, in all probability, carry back these doctrines very close to the Apostolic age. Nor is this all : DOMITIANUS, Bishop of Ancyra, whose words are quoted farther on, writing in the sixth century, is very positive indeed. He seems to assert the *universality* of such teaching *before* and after ORIGEN'S days : a very significant statement. To this evidence must be added that of the passage respecting S. CLEMENT just referred to. Indeed, when the great scantiness of early records, during the three

first quarters of the second century, is considered, it is cause for deep thankfulness that we possess such strong evidence as that just quoted, of the extreme antiquity of the doctrine of universalism.

We may be said to emerge into the full daylight of Christian history, with the famous S. CLEMENT of Alexandria, 190 A.D., head of the catechetical school there. Of the great school of Alexandria I shall not attempt to speak at length, but two points must be noted: *(a)* how widespread was its influence in leavening Christian thought; and *(b)* how that influence was exercised in favour of the doctrine of restoration. As to S. CLEMENT, I may say that his nearness to the Apostolic age, his wide and various learning, and sympathetic spirit, combine to render his teaching worthy of special notice. His language is clear. "So CHRIST saves *all* men. Some He converts by penalties, others who follow Him of their own will, and in pursuance of the worthiness of His honour; that *every knee* may be bent to Him, of those in Heaven, on earth, and under the earth, *i.e.*, angels, men, and souls, who, before His coming, passed away from this mortal life."—*In 1 S. Joann.* "All men are CHRIST'S, some by knowing Him, the rest not yet." "He is the Saviour, not of some (only) and of the rest not" (*i.e.*, He is actually Saviour of all) . . "for how is He Lord and Saviour if He is not Lord and Saviour of all?" But He is indeed Saviour of those who believe

. . while of those who do not believe He is Lord, until having become able to confess Him, they obtain through Him the benefit appropriate and suitable (to their case) . . He by the Father's will directs the salvation of all . . For all things have been ordered, both universally and in part, by the Lord of the universe, with a view to the salvation of the universe. . But needful correction, by the goodness of the great overseeing Judge, through (by means of) the attendant angels, through various prior judgments, through the final *(pantelous)* judgment, compels even those who have become still more callous to repent."—*Strom. lib.* vii. These words seem to teach that all (even those who are callous) are finally restored (*a*) by correction, (*b*) or by angelic ministries, (*c*) by previous judgments, (*d*) by the final judgment. "The universe has become ceaseless light . . The Sun of righteousness who traverses the universe, pervades all humanity alike. . . Giving us the inalienable inheritance of the Father . . Writing his laws on our hearts. What laws are those He thus writes ? That *all* shall know God from small to great. . . It is always the purpose of God to save the human flock (humanity)."—*Adm. ad gent.* S. CLEMENT's teaching as to the design of penalty, is conceived in the spirit of the larger hope. God's "blame is censure concealed in an artful mode of help, ministering salvation under a veil."—*Pæd. lib.* i. And again: "David very plainly states the motives of God's threats

(by saying), 'when He slew them they sought Him and turned to Him.' "—*ib.* Commenting on Deut. xxxii. 23-5, where God uses very bitter threats of destruction, S. CLEMENT says: "The Divine nature is not angry, but is very far from being so, for it is an excellent *artifice* to terrify utterly, lest men sin."—*ib.*

Of S. CLEMENT I would say that universalism is not incidentally taught by him, but seems to lie at the very centre of his teaching. God, in his view, is ruling the universe with a fixed resolve to save all. If men are disobedient to the message of salvation, then by discipline and by punishments, He sooner or later brings all to repentance. Before passing on, I may point out that S. CLEMENT, like many of the Fathers, seems to regard death (not of the righteous merely), but death in itself, as a provision designed in mercy for the healing of the lapsed race of man (see on death, ch. vi.), and (as a natural consequence), in his view, the penalty of the law is beautiful and good; its object is healing even in inflicting death. "So that when any one falls into *incurable* evil . . it will be for his good if he is put to death."—*Strom.* i. Even of Sodom, CLEMENT writes: "The just punishment of the Sodomites became to men an image of the *salvation* which is well calculated for men."—*Pæd.* iii. 8. And, writing on *Jude* vii., of the doom of Sodom and Gomorrah, he says: "By

which the Lord signifies that pardon had been granted, and that on being disciplined they had repented;" and on verse v., says of the Jews, "they perished until they turned to the Lord." —*Frag.* ii. *(in An. Nic. lib.), i.e.*, by dying they lived. This view, so significant, which treats death as a benefit and a cure, is frequent in the Fathers, as we shall see.

There is much that is interesting to the same effect in a writer earlier than S. CLEMENT, ATHENAGORAS, 177 A.D. I give a few sentences: "And as this follows, of necessity there must be a resurrection of the bodies which are dead or even wholly dissolved, and the same men must be formed anew . . *for if this takes place, there follows*, too, the end which befits the nature of man. But the end of an intelligent life and a reasonable judgment, one cannot go wrong in saying, is . . to rejoice unceasingly in the vision of Him who is, and of His decrees."—*De. res.* c. XXV.

Further proof of the prevalence of universalist views at a very early date in the Church may be drawn from the so-called SIBYLLINE books, which were composed (except a certain portion, which is pre-christian), at various dates in the second and third centuries. These books furnish us with most valuable evidence as to the beliefs current in those days. It will be seen how sharp is the contrast between them and our modern notions. A very striking picture is drawn of

the end of the world. All things, *even Hades*, are to be melted down in the divine fire in order *to be purified.* All, just and unjust, pass through *unquenchable* fire. The unjust are further committed to *hell* (Gehenna) ; they are bound in fetters not to be broken ; they pray vainly to God ; yet these men* are finally to *be saved* at the request of the righteous. They are to be "removed elsewhere to a life eternal for immortals."—*Lib.* ii. 335.†

I give next a few quotations from the famous ORIGEN, 234 A.D., born at Alexandria, and when only eighteen called to preside over its school of theology.

Writing on 1 *Cor.* xv. 28, he says: "When the Son is said to be subject to the Father, the perfect restoration of the whole creation is signified."—*De prin.* iii. 5. And again, speaking of the end, "God will be all . . "seeing evil nowhere exists, for God is all things." "When death shall no longer exist, or the sting of death, nor any evil at all, then, verily God will be all in all."—*Ib.* iii. vi. "But those who have been removed from their primal state of blessedness have not been removed irrecoverably . . and being remoulded by salutary discipline and principles, they may recover themselves, and be restored to their condition of happiness."—*Ib.*

* I understand the author to speak of all the lost

† In passing, too, we may at any rate note that the APOCALYPSE OF MOSES (in part, probably very antient), represents God as saying to Satan : "There shall not be granted to thee ear or wing or one limb of all which those have whom thou hast enticed by thy wickedness." Even if the primary reference be to Adam and Eve, still the drift and spirit of these words is quite in harmony with the larger hope.

Few men have suffered more from misrepresentation than ORIGEN ; and yet to few have been granted gifts so striking and so diversified. He stands perhaps unrivalled in the union in one individual of the deepest piety and the widest learning ; of original genius, combined with an industry almost superhuman. Of the alleged condemnation of ORIGEN I shall speak further on. Here it is enough to point out (1) that the doctrine of "restoration" did NOT originate with him, as we have clearly seen ; (2) that, as we shall see, his views of that doctrine were probably, in most important details, *wholly different* from the larger hope, as we hold it ; (3) that in any case it was so completely independent of his general system of doctrine (Origenism), as to have been held by his earnest opponents.

Another antient universalist is the well-known S. GREGORY (Thaumaturgus), 254 A.D. Born of heathen parents, he was converted by ORIGEN, whose friend and pupil he became.

As Bishop of Neo-Cæsarea, he was distinguished for orthodoxy and numerous (alleged) miracles. He there converted nearly the whole population to Christianity. Bound as he was to ORIGEN by the closest possible ties, he would naturally, in turn, teach the larger hope; and thus, from so important a centre as Cæsarea, a vast district would in turn be leavened. That S. GREGORY did, in fact, so teach, we can infer from a passage in RUFINUS, *Invec. in Hier. Lib.* i. *prope fin.*

I have next to cite some extracts from METHODIUS, A.D. 293, Bishop of Tyre, and a

martyr. His teachings seem clearly to involve universalism.

Thus he asserts that death was given for the destruction of sin in man: "God for this cause pronounced him mortal and clothed him with mortality, that man might not be an undying evil (*i.e.*, that evil in man might not be endless) . . in order that, by the dissolution of the body, *sin* might *altogether be destroyed from the very root;* that there might not be left even the smallest particle of root, from which new shoots of sins might break forth." He goes on to employ the illustration of a fig tree growing in the walls of a splendid temple, to preserve which the fig tree is torn away by the root and dies. "In the same way also, God, the builder, checked by the seasonable application of death, man His own temple, when man had fostered sin like a wild fig tree . . in order that the flesh, after sin is withered and dead, may, like a restored temple, be raised up . . immortal, while sin is *utterly and entirely destroyed.*" Here death is asserted to be God's mode of cure.—*On the Res.* iv. and v. "For take notice . . that if the artificer wishes that, that on which he has bestowed so much pains, shall be quite free from injury, he will be impelled to melt it down and restore it to its former condition; . . wherefore if he should wish it to be perfectly beautiful, it must be broken up and recast, in order that all disfigurements . . may disappear . . while the image is restored again. . . *For it is impossible for an image under the hands of the original artist to be lost,* even if it be melted down again, for it may be restored; . . 'the blemishes,' he adds, 'melt away and they cannot be restored.'—*ib.* vi. God seeing man, His fairest work, corrupted . . could not endure to leave him so, lest he should . . bear the *blame to eternity,* but dissolved him (by death) again into his original materials, in order that, by remodelling, *all* the blemishes in man might waste away and disappear."—*ib.* In the next paragraph METHODIUS repeats this statement. His words seem to involve that God's image cannot be lost, and that death and resurrection (the common lot) involve

the cure of sin. On the lost sheep, he says: "The ninety-nine sheep are the heavenly hosts, and man (mankind?) is the one lost sheep (which CHRIST seeks and finds), and so, by CHRIST made man, God undoes the sentence passed on all; so that 'as in Adam *all* die, even so in CHRIST should *all* be made alive.'"—*Banquet* i., *ch.* vi. CHRIST was sacrificed and rose again, in order "that He might be by *all created things* equally adored, for to Him 'every knee shall bow, of things,'" &c.—*Or. on the Palms.*—This treatise is in one manuscript assigned to S. CHRYSOSTOM. "Man, after having been formed for God's worship, . . *cannot* return to discord and corruption."—*Frag.* i. *ed. Clark.* "It is incredible that we, who are the image of God, should be altogether destroyed as being without honour."—*Frag. on Jonah.*

Some fragments have been preserved (translated from an Arabic manuscript) of ALEXANDER, Bishop of Alexandria, 312 A.D. — ARIUS' opponent. The brief extracts which I give may shew the drift of his teaching:—

"CHRIST is the resurrection and salvation of all."—*Serm. de an et. cor.* He goes on to use language implying the deliverance of all from Hades. "Hades gleamed with light as the Star went down thither: in spirit He set free the souls (saying): 'Go forth, ye dead' (all apparently). O Lord, receive man who is thine . . recover Thy image, Thy Adam . . To heaven CHRIST ascends, bearing not gold or silver, but man, formed after His image."—*Ib.* The natural meaning of this seems to be the recovery of all, as all bear the divine image, a view by no means uncommon, as we shall see.

We may now be said to have entered on the second of those periods into which our enquiry is divided. The years stretching away from the present date to 430 or 440 A.D., are crowded

more than any other with names illustrious in the annals of the Church. And it is very noteworthy that precisely in this period universalism finds its most numerous, and ablest, and most outspoken advocates. From EUSEBIUS of Cæsarea, 312 A.D., whose leaning to ORIGEN is well known, I next quote :—

Commenting on *Ps.* ii., he says: "The Son's 'breaking in pieces' His enemies is for the sake of remoulding them, as a potter his own work; as *Jer.* xviii. 6, says: *i.e., to restore* them once more to their former state." Again, on *Ps.* cl., we find the following comment: "The first Psalm of this book predicted the destruction of the wicked, but the last invites *every* spirit to praise God." "Even the impious, when the day of the Lord arrives, shall cast forth and fling away every false opinion of their mind with regard to idols."—*In Is.* ii. 22.—words that are certainly suggestive when speaking of the universal judgment, as here. "CHRIST will therefore subject to Himself *everything* (the universe), and this *saving* subjection it is right to regard as similar to that, according to which the Son Himself shall be subjected unto Him, who subjected to Himself all things. . . But after the close of everything, He will not dwell in a few, but in all those who are then worthy of the kingdom of Heaven. So then shall come to pass (God's being) all in all, when He inhabits as His people all (absolutely *tous pantas*).—*De eccles. theol.* iii. 16.

EUSEBIUS has preserved some fragments of the writings of MARCELLUS of Ancyra, 315 A.D. I may quote one :—

"For what else do the words mean, 'Until the times of restitution' (Acts iii. 21) but that the Apostle designed to point out that time in which all things partake of that perfect restoration?"—*Cont. Mar.* ii. 4.

Here I may pause to insert a brief passage from SERAPION (ATHANASIUS' bosom friend), 346 A.D. His words seem certainly to teach the final extinction of evil. In his view, evil, as consisting in choice merely, has no real existence, and easily passes away, leaving no trace behind. "It is of itself nothing, nor can it of itself exist or exist always; but is in process of vanishing, and by vanishing proved to be unable to exist." —*Adv. Man. c.* iv.

We now turn to a famous Latin Father, S. HILARY, 354 A.D., Bishop of Poictiers, in his day one of the most distinguished champions of orthodoxy.

Commenting on the parable of the one sheep lost out of the hundred, he says: "This one sheep is man, and by one man the *entire race is to be understood* . . the ninety and nine are the heavenly angels . . and by us (mankind) who *all are one*, the number of the heavenly church is to be filled up. And therefore it is that every creature awaits the revelation of the sons of God."—*In S. Matt.* c. xviii. This extract teaches universalism plainly. The whole human race, who are one, are the one lost sheep, which is destined to be found by the Good Shepherd. Again, S. HILARY has a long and interesting comment on *Ps.* ii. 8-9, pervaded by the larger hope. In giving to CHRIST the ends of the earth as His possession is meant, he says, a dominion, absolutely universal, one to be summed up in S. PAUL'S words, which teach: "That every knee of things in heaven, and earth, and under the earth, are to bend in JESUS's name" (a passage very dear to the early universalists). And as to the nature of this supremacy over all, S. HILARY proceeds to say that by CHRIST's "ruling

the nations with a rod of iron" is indeed meant the care of the Good Shepherd; and by "breaking them in pieces like a potter's vessel" is really signified the vessel's *restoration*. "In this way God will bruise and break the nations of His inheritance, so as to reform them." And the breaking of the vessel, he says, takes place "When the body, being dissolved by death, and thus broken up, the restoration shall be effected by the artificer's will." This surely is the same process as that in *Rev.* xix. 15, where CHRIST smites the nations and rules them with His rod of iron, 'treading the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God.'" But if all this means *salvation*, do we not arrive at the larger hope? The same may be said of HILARY'S view, that the true meaning of God's slaying sinners is their conversion, as in the following on *Ps.* cxxxviii.: "'Wilt thou not slay the sinner,' can He who came to save that which was lost, and to redeem the sinner (really), pray that the sinner may be slain? Far be it from Him to desire that he should be slain. But the sinner is slain when he dies to the world . . In this way is the sinner slain when the birth of spiritual life is renewed, by the death of all vices and sins." While S. HILARY may be fairly styled (at times) diffuse, involved, and inconsistent (the latter a fact in perfect harmony with his explicit advocacy of dissimulation), yet his writing conveys to me a distinct impression of an inner belief in the larger hope; as, *e g.*, when writing on *Ps.* cxix. 39, he says that the Psalmist knows a life of immortal glory to have been promised to him by the fact of his being formed in God's image, which is, of course, true of every man. Or again, take the following comment on CHRIST'S words: "'As thou hast given him power over all flesh in order that he should give eternal life to all that thou hast given him,' . . so the Father gave all things and the Son accepted all things . . and honoured by the Father, was (in turn) to honour the Father, and to employ the power received in *giving eternity of life to all flesh* . . now this is life eternal that they may know Thee," &c.—*De Trin. lib.* ix. Again, on *Ps.* lxvi. 1.: "Sing unto the Lord all the

earth," he says this means *all* of Adam's race, and that the law of our salvation is shewn by the words: "For *all the world* shall worship Thee," v. 3. "So that *every thing* of earthly birth shall adore and sing to the Most High, abandoning the lies of impiety." "When the poor in spirit shall have been set in the heavenly kingdom, then *every creature*, together groaning and mourning, is to be set free from the bondage of corruption."—*Ps.* lxix. By the sea's praising God is meant, he says, the abode of hell—*inferni sedem.*—*ib.* v. 35.

Our next witness shall be FABIUS MARIUS VICTORINUS, 360 A.D., of African birth, a very distinguished rhetorician at Rome (where he was converted to Christianity), who uses language which teaches the ultimate purification and salvation of all. We thus are permitted a glimpse of the beliefs current at Rome in the fourth century. They exhibit, as we should expect (see opening remarks in next chapter) distinct traces of Eastern influence. VICTORINUS' universalism is also largely based on his belief in the Deity of our Lord.

"And because CHRIST is the life, He is that by whom all things have been made, and for whom (in quem) all things have been made, for *all things cleansed by Him return into eternal life.*"—*Adv. Ar.* iii. "In assuming our flesh CHRIST assumed (the position of) universal word *(logos)* of flesh . . and therefore succoured all flesh; as is said in Isaiah, 'All flesh shall see Thee the salvation of God;' and in the Psalms, 'To Thee shall all flesh come' . . for in Him were all things universally—the universal soul and the universal flesh—and these were lifted up on the Cross and cleansed by the life-giving God the Word, by (Him who is) universally (the Word) of the entire universe. For by Him all things were

made."—*ib.* VICTORINUS' periods are harsh and involved, but his meaning seems clear. CHRIST is, he says, ***universally, i e.,*** to the entire universe at once, and ***actually*** Creator, Word (***logos***), and Saviour—actually the Saviour; for the whole train of thought, excludes any such idea as that of a merely potential salvation. And so, he adds, "He is Jesus Christ, because He will save all things unto life."—*Adv. Ar.* iii. 8. "CHRIST fulfilled the mystery in order that *all* life with the flesh (*i.e.*, after the resurrection), filled with eternal light, should return free from all corruption into the heavens."—*ib.* i. 57. "All things shall be rendered spiritual at the consummation of the world." (1 *Cor.* xv. 28).—*Adv. Ar.* i. 36. "At the consummation all things shall be one."—*ib.* 36. "Therefore ***all things,*** converted to Him, ***shall become one, i.e.,*** spiritual . . through the Son all things shall be made one, for all things are by Him. . . for *all* things that exist are ONE, though they be different. For the body of the entire universe is not like a mere heap, which becomes a body only by the contact of its particles; but it is a body chiefly in that—its several parts being closely and mutually bound together—it forms a ***continuous chain.*** For the chain is this—God, Jesus Christ: the Spirit, the Intellect (***nous***): the Soul, the Angelic host: and lastly, *all* subordinate bodily existences."—*ib.* 25. To VICTORINUS the universe is one organic whole: a living chain clasped and bound together to the very throne of God. "The ***logos*** was made 'all in all,' he begot all things and saved them."—*ib.* 26. Again, commenting on ***Eph.*** i. iv., he says: "Thus, perfection having been completed throughout all things and in all things by CHRIST, all universally shall be made one through CHRIST and in CHRIST."

The next witness I shall call is a famous Catholic Father, TITUS, Bishop of Bostra, 364 A.D., in whose writings we see the larger hope freely taught in Arabia by one whom his

editor, CAILLOU, describes as "the most learned among the learned bishops of his age, and a most famous champion of the truth."

I transcribe a striking passage, in which he is speaking of evil spirits. "The very pit itself is a place of torments and of punishments, but is *not eternal* . . It was made that it might be a *medicine and yield help to those who sin.* Sacred are the stripes *which are remedies* and *helps* to those who have strayed." He adds that the object of penalty is healing. "Therefore let us not complain of the pits (of hell)—abyssis—but rather know that by torments and punishments *those are healed* who have offended." He goes on to say "That the evil spirits (dæmones) themselves *are not radically evil,* nor have they *the root of sin and vice* (in themselves), but have sinned of free will, seeing that they *were not naturally evil.*" —*Lib.* i., ch. xxxii. Such words from a Bishop and Father, so eminent and so orthodox, are very significant, as seeming to teach the salvation of all evil spirits. Again his view of death is significant, and quite inconsistent with the doctrine of never ending punishment, or of annihilation. He says that "it comes not as an injury to the just, nor as a punishment and vengeance to the unjust, for that which is natural cannot be a punishment."—*Lib.* ii. xxvii. "Death, ordained by the law of nature, is not evil in whatever way it come."—*ib.* xiii.—"To the unrighteous death is the end of their unrighteousness."—*ib.* xii. "Death is not appointed by God to cause men loss and hurt, but is appointed for the greatest benefit both to the righteous and the unrighteous."—*ib.* xvi. TITUS maintains significantly that "if death were an evil, *blame would rightly fall on Him who appointed it*" (God).—*ib.* xxvii. "In whatever way it comes, death is to universal nature (to everything) a boon."—*ib.* xiii. "Death is a benefit to the righteous and the unrighteous: to the one it brings repose, to the other the end of his sins."—*ib.* xxii.

I give next a few sentences of a little known author, MACARIUS MAGNES, who flourished about this time.

"Death was sent to our first parents in order that, by the dissolution of the body, even all the sin arising from the bond (of body and spirit) should be totally destroyed."—***Not. et frag.*** xix. Here I may point out the great value of passages from the Fathers which show sympathy with universalism, which breathe its spirit, which, indirectly, involve it. And the reason is plain, because not only in the peculiar conditions of the Patristic age—p. 88, but at all times, men's convictions in favour of the larger hope are usually far stronger than their words; and a deep seated belief in universalism is often suppressed, or at most expressed indirectly.

Of S. EPHREM (Syrus), 370 A.D., it is enough to say that he teaches very clearly the liberation of all souls from Hades. "CHRIST burst open the most voracious belly of Hades . . seeing this death trembled . . and sent forth *all* whom from the first man up to that time he had kept in bonds."—*Serm.* xviii. *De sanc. Cruce.—Ed. Caillou.*

Another very great name there is, whose testimony must be given here, S. GREGORY, of Nazianzus, 370 A.D., president of the second great Ecumenical Council, "the most learned bishop in one of the most learned ages of the church." With S. GREGORY we come to the first of the celebrated group of teachers, who, in the fourth century, throw lustre on Cappadocia, a country rude and little cultured.

Let us take a few examples of the way in which he hints, to say the least, his belief in the final salvation of all men. Speaking of the dead, he tells us that God brings them to life as partakers either of fire, or of illuminating light. "But whether ***even all*** shall hereafter partake of God, let it be else-

where discussed"—these words speak for themselves. In the same tone, cautious, and no doubt influenced by that doctrine of Reserve already mentioned, S. GREGORY says elsewhere—"I know also a fire not cleansing but penal . . which, more to be dreaded than all, is conjoined with the undying worm, which is not quenched . . unless anyone pleases, even in this instance, to understand this more humanely and worthily of Him who punishes."—*Orat.* xi. "*It is manifest,*" says PETAVIUS, "that in this place, GREGORY doubted about the pains of the damned, whether they would be endless, or whether they are to be estimated rather in accordance with the mercy of God, so as at some time to be brought to an end." But there remains further evidence of S. GREGORY's views. He teaches, with perfect distinctness, that when CHRIST descended into hell, He liberated not some, but *all* the souls there in prison. This view, as already shewn, implies universalism. "Until He loosed by His blood *all* who groan nnder Tartarean chains."—*Carm.* xxxv. Again: "CHRIST burst open the dark portals of Hades and gave liberty to the souls."—*Carm.* lv. Again: "With (the) dead He was united; from amidst (the) dead He rose; (the) dead He brought up."—*Arcanor. Carm.* ii. "To-day salvation has been brought to the universe to *whatsoever* is visible and *whatsoever* is invisible . . to-day the gates of Hades are thrown open."—*Or.* 42. Again it is significant that S. GREGORY speaks of death as a gain to man, because it puts an end to sin, and of penalty as a mercy. "Adam receives death as a gain, and (thereby) the cutting off of sin; that evil should not be immortal: and so the penalty turns out a kindness, for thus I am of opinion it is that God punishes."—*Orat.* xlii. Again, having used language that seems to favour the ordinary view, S. GREGORY goes on to say "that everything *(ta panta)* shall be subdued to CHRIST, and they shall be subdued by a full knowledge (*epignosis*) of Him, and by a remodelling . . Now God will be All in All at the time of restitution"—*Or.* xxxvi. Again, S. GREGORY seems to adopt the view which treats the human race as one organic whole: "A few drops of blood renew the whole world, and become for *all* men that, which rennet is for milk, uniting and drawing us into one."—*Or.* xlii. Again: "CHRIST, stretching

His sacred body to the ends (of the earth), brought thence that which is mortal, and bound it into one man."—*Carm.* ii. "CHRIST is like leaven for the entire mass (of mankind), and having made that which was condemned (or 'damned'), *one* with Himself, frees the whole from condemnation (damnation)." *Or.* xxxvi. It is certainly noteworthy again that this Father speaks of the Novatians (who die in *heresy*, and in a way not that of CHRIST), as follows: "Perhaps there (in the other world), they shall be baptized with the fire, the last and more laborious, and more protracted baptism, which devours the substance like hay, and *consumes the lightness of all evil.*"—*Or.* xxxix. These words are abundantly suggestive to the thoughtful. "Christ's sacrifice is not for a small part of the world, nor (to last) for a short time, but is that which cleanses the whole world—lasting for ever."—*Or.* xlii. Does this not seem to hint at a future cleansing of all not cleansed in this life? Lastly, let us hear what S. GREGORY says of God's anger: "When you read in Scripture of God's being angry or threatening a sword against the wicked . . understand this rightly and not wrongly. . . How, then, are these metaphors used? Figuratively. In what way? With a view to terrifying the minds of *the simpler sort.*"—*Carm. iamb.* xxi. These words recall at once a striking passage of S. GREGORY (of Nyssa), elsewhere quoted: "God's judgment uses threats to the lazy and vain, but by those who are more intelligent, it (the judgment) is believed to be a *medicine*, a *cure* from God."—*Cat. orat.* viii. The passages already quoted leave, I think, little doubt as to S. GREGORY's views, but there remain two pieces of evidence to complete our proof: (i) It is certain that S. GREGORY's authority as teaching "restoration" was appealed to by the monks of the New Laura early in the 6th century.—*Vit. S. Cyril, c.* 10. (ii) We have, finally, the assertion of RUFINUS, a contemporary, to the same effect.—*Invec. i, prop. fin.*

Next in the list of Cappadocian teachers are two illustrious names—(brothers) BASIL and GREGORY, Bishops of Cæsarea and Nyssa respec-tely, to whom should be added a sister,

S. MACRINA, the younger. BASIL'S teacher in childhood had been another S. MACRINA, his grandmother, herself a disciple of that GREGORY who was ORIGEN'S bosom friend and pupil, and a universalist.—p. 115. In such a family the larger hope might be expected to find a congenial home. Certain it is that S. MACRINA (the younger), to whose holy counsels BASIL largely owed his choice of a religious life, was an ardent, nay, an extreme universalist. And no less certain is it that GREGORY of Nyssa taught openly and strongly the same creed. I know what may be alleged from BASIL'S works to prove that he did not share these views ; but I also know that one who scruples not (more than once) to attribute dissimulation, for a good end, even to our Blessed Lord, may be supposed likely in his own person to copy such a pattern. And I feel also unable to reconcile with the doctrine of endless evil such passages as I shall here quote from S. BASIL.

He is commenting on the text "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of CHRIST"—2 *Cor.* x. 5.—"the Apostle says not this, or that, but *all* ; and again, not this, or that, but *all* disobedience."—*v.* 6 . . Now when every height which exalts itself against the knowledge of God is destroyed, and every thought is led captive to obey CHRIST, and all disobedience is alike punished . . then *nothing remains excluded from the obedience of* CHRIST.—*De jud. Dei.* These words seem to convey the idea of a future to come, when obedience to CHRIST shall be universal. Take, again, these words : "The peace the Lord gives knows neither end nor limit. For *all* things shall be subject to Him, and *all* things shall acknowledge His empire ; and when God shall be All in All, silence having been imposed on those who used

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that the sinners' ***conversion*** is meant, as in ***Ps.*** xxxvii. 17 where it is said the "arm of the wicked shall be broken." This he explains as meaning the breaking of the power of sin, so that their sin when sought cannot be found. "For it is the same as this, 'I kill and I make alive.'—***Deut.*** xxxii. 39. For He will ***kill the evil liver*** in order that, cleansing away his evil life, He may ***give him a new one.*** Therefore 'the destruction of the sinners and transgressors shall be together,' in order that they may ***cease to be disobedient;*** and 'they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed,' ***i.e.***, the sin whereby they have offended against God shall no more be committed." S. BASIL goes on to imply that the destruction of the Man of sin, by CHRIST at his coming, is the removal of his sin, as JEROME teaches.—(***In Mic. v.*** 8.) The above passages by no means exhaust the quotations that might be made from this Father to the same general effect.

Before passing on we may relieve the tedium of quotations, by noticing a touching family picture, not unworthy to take its place side by side with the famous scene of S. AUGUSTINE and his mother.—*Confess. lib.* ix. S. MACRINA (the younger), of whom I have just spoken, is lying on her death bed, to which S. GREGORY (of Nyssa) has come, that they may together mourn for BASIL, their brother, just taken to his rest. The dying MACRINA, strong in faith and in hope, cheers her surviving brother, by noble thoughts and assurances of the true extent of CHRIST's redemption—as destined to embrace savingly all humanity, destined to blot from the universe every stain of sin. So striking were these thoughts and this interview, that S. GORY has recorded the whole in his well-n book—*De an. et res.*—from which I shall several extracts.

Our next witness deserves special attention—the famous GREGORY of NYSSA, 380 A.D., at once the very flower of orthodoxy, and, like his sister, the most unflinching advocate of extreme universalism.

I proceed to quote in proof of this. S. GREGORY, in a remarkable passage, speaks of CHRIST as "both *freeing mankind* from their wickedness, and healing the *very inventor of wickedness* (the Devil)."—*Cat. orat. ch.* 26. Again, he tells us that "when, in the lengthened circuits of time, the evil now blended with and implanted in them, has been *taken away*: when the restoration to their ancient state of those who now lie in wickedness shall have taken place, there shall be with one voice thanksgiving from *the whole creation.*"—*Ib.* In another treatise the same great Father writes, "for it is needful that at some time, *evil shall be removed utterly and entirely* from the realm of existence. For since by its very nature evil cannot exist apart from free choice, when free choice becomes in the power of God, shall not evil advance to *utter abolition, so that no receptacle for it shall be left!*"—*De an. et. resurrect.* Here it is quite clear that the saint anticipates the utter extinction of evil at some future day. Again, writing on *Phil.* ii. 10, S. GREGORY says that "in this passage is signified, that when *evil has been obliterated* in the long circuits of the ages, nothing shall be left outside the limits of good; but even from them shall be unanimously uttered the confession of the Lordship of CHRIST."—*Ib.* "The word seems to lay down the doctrine of the *perfect obliteration of wickedness,* for if God shall be in all things that are, obviously wickedness shall not be in them."—*Ib.* Again, he teaches "that a time shall come when *all* the corruptions that sin has brought in shall be blotted from *the whole creation.*"—*Ib.* In another treatise of the same Father, the *Orat. in* 1 *Cor.* xv. 28, there is the widest possible assertion of universalism, viz., "At some time the nature of evil shall pass *to extinction, being fully and completely removed from the realm of existence;* and divine unmixed goodness shall embrace in itself *every rational nature:* nothing that has been

made by God falling away from the Kingdom of God: when, all the evil that is blended with existence, being melted away by the action of the cleansing fire, everything that has had its being from God, shall become such as it was at first, when as yet untainted by evil." In this strain S. GREGORY continues all through this treatise. Every form of evil is to be swept away; every rational creature shall bow the knee in love and peace to Jesus Christ. "For it is evident that God will, in truth, be 'in all' then when there shall be *no evil seen* in anything." And again, "when *every created being* is at harmony with itself . . and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord; when *every creature* shall have been made one body, then shall the body of CHRIST be subject to the Father. . . Now the body of CHRIST, as I have often said, is *the whole of humanity*." Again, in the clearest manner S. GREGORY maintains that subjection to God is reconciliation to God. "Where it is said that God's enemies shall be subjected to God . . this is meant that the power of evil shall be taken away, and they who, on account of their disobedience, were called God's enemies, shall *by subjection* be made *God's friends*. . When, then, *all* who once were God's enemies, shall have been made His footstool (because they *shall receive in themselves the divine imprint*), when death shall have been destroyed; in the subjection of all, which is not servile humility, but immortality and blessedness, CHRIST is said, by S. Paul, to be made subject to God." A favourite doctrine of this Father's is that the resurrection involves restoration—as undoing of all the work of the Fall. It brings immortality and incorruption—things, says S. GREGORY, peculiar to the Divine nature, and in themselves a blessing. There is a long and striking passage to this effect in the *De an. et resur.* "The apostle's words seem to me to imply . . what our definition contains, *i.e.*, that the Resurrection *is nothing else than the restoration of our nature to its ancient* state of blessedness. This corruptible must put on incorruption. *Evidently*, incorruption and honour and glory are peculiar to the Divine nature. . . *Every* human being singly, divested of mortality and blended with the earth, is to be born again in the Resurrection into his pristine beauty. . Doubtless, the evil are to look for great severity from the Judge;

but after due curative treatment, and when the fire shall have destroyed all foreign matter, then the nature, even of these, shall improve by the copious nurture they receive, and at length they, too, shall regain the Divine impress."

On this question more will be found in the following chapter. Let us here note the length to which S. GREGORY goes. Universalism, not in isolated sentences, but as the centre of his teaching, characterizes this great Father. And this universalism is as fearless as it is clear; it is written in defence of the Catholic Faith. With the Dean of Wells, I say, "That S. GREGORY claims to be taking his stand on the doctrines of the Church in this teaching, with as much confidence as when he is expounding the mysteries of the Divine nature, as set forth in the Creed of Nicæa." Let me proceed to quote:—

Writing on *Ps.* xciv. 20: "In these words," he says, "Is declared the object of the Divine plan with regard to mankind. God's aid suffered not man to remain in the confines of Hades, but . . provided a remedy equal to the pains of sin. . In this, hinting at a very glorious truth that evil is not eternal, . . by which God shews that neither is sin from eternity, *nor will it last to eternity*. For that which did not always exist shall *not* last for ever; and the manner in which evil is abolished is shewn by the Jews slaying our Lord, which predicts the abolition of sin. . The Lord will, in his just judgment, destroy the wickedness of sinners; *not their nature; . . . wickedness being thus destroyed*, and its imprint being *left in none*, we shall *all* be fashioned after CHRIST, and in *all* that one character shall shine, which originally was imprinted on our nature." On *Ps.* vii. 6: "Arise, O Lord, in thy wrath, and exult over the end of thine enemies" (so the words run in S.

GREGORY's text). "The term 'wrath,'" he says, "shews the retributive power of the just judge, and for the rest the *extinction of sin:* for that alone is contrary to nature which is seen to be opposed to good, which is sin, whose end is *extinction* and *a return to nothingness.*" He then goes on to explain that to put an end to the enemies of God, means not to allow to human life any power of turning to evil; "For as the end of disease is health, so here the Psalmist calls the change of the nature of *mankind, from evil to a state of blessedness, the end of (God's) enemies.*" Here let us notice the stress laid on *wrath, justice,* and *retribution,* and the conclusion so strictly drawn, that these involve the termination of sin. Again, S. GREGORY writes on *Psalm* lvi.: "For the nature of sin is unstable and *transitory* . . nor shall it last for ever in the universe. . . It is like a plant on a house top, not *rooted,* not sown, not ploughed in, and though for the present it may thrive with its unsubstantial shoot, yet in the time to come, in the restoration to goodness of all things, it passes away and vanishes. So not *even a trace of the evil which now* abounds in us shall remain in the life that is promised as an object of our hope. So, too, writing on *Psalm* cvii. 42: "And all iniquity shall stop her mouth," this Father says: "How blessed is that life in which the mouth of iniquity shall be for ever stopped. This is the crown of all blessings, the head of all hope . . that nature shall no longer be troubled by wickedness, but that *all* transgression shall be put away; that is to say, the very inventor of transgression (the Devil). For this is signified by the comprehensive word *all.*" Again, on *Psalm* cl. 5: "Praise Him upon the high-sounding cymbals," there is a very striking comment. "These cymbals," he says, "joined with cymbals, show the (future) harmony between the human and the angelic natures, when human nature shall have attained its end. One cymbal is the heavenly nature of the angels. The other is the rational creation of mankind; but sin separated the one from the other, which, when at last the goodness of God shall have united, then shall both, made one, chant forth that hymn, as the

great Apostle says, '*Every* tongue, of things in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, shall confess that CHRIST is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.' Which done, the cymbals shall chant their song of victory . . all enmity being extinguished; which being *wholly* . . *extinguished* and *reduced* to *nothingness*, ceaselessly shall be rendered by *every spirit alike*, praise to God *for ever*: in that day, as there shall *be no longer any sinner* (sin no more existing), *every spirit* must then praise the Lord." S. GREGORY proceeds: "Such is the meaning of this final *Psalm*, in which *all sins being wholly abolished*, praise shall be sung to God; which praise alike contains (implies) our being *incapable* of turning to sin, and unites our song with God's glory; *when every created being* shall *be harmonised into one choir*, and when, like a cymbal, the reasonable creation, and that which is now severed by sin, shall pour forth a pleasing strain, due to mutual harmony. . . Then shall *every spirit praise God for ever*, proclaiming His grace and abounding with an increase of joy to all eternity."*

As some readers may not grasp the full significance of this evidence, let me point out that, even if it stood alone, it should dispose of the pleasing fiction, for such it is, that the Church of the fourth or fifth centuries, was unfriendly to universalism. What are the facts? Very few of his day were so prominent, or so famous, as S. GREGORY; none more thoroughly orthodox; a Confessor and most able champion of the Nicene faith; next to GREGORY of Nazianzus, the most famous member of the General Council of Constantinople; chosen to draw up that Creed, which we to this day recite; appealed to by subsequent

*Dr. Pusey thinks it *fair* to describe this Father's teaching as '*mists*' (of Origenism): such are the ways of theological controversy.

Councils as *a very bulwark of the Catholic Church.* Such was GREGORY, this fearless advocate of universalism; nay, of a universalism *wide enough to embrace every rational being.*

With the celebrated DIDYMUS, 380 A.D., we return to the school of Alexandria, of which he was head. "DIDYMUS," says S. JEROME, "surpassed all of his day in knowledge of the Scriptures." But a small portion has survived of his numerous writings.

He argues "that as by the Son all things endowed with reason received their being, so by Him the salvation of all of them has been wrought out. . . For CHRIST brought peace to all things through the blood of His Cross, whether in heaven or on earth. . . For as men, by giving up their sins, are made subject to Him, so, too, *the higher intelligences* . . are made subject to Him, on the completion of the dispensation ordered for the salvation of all."—*In* 1 *St. Pet.* iii. These words seem to involve the salvation of the fallen angels. Didymus, elsewhere, speaks of a time when *all* are to come to the knowledge of the fulness of CHRIST, *i.e.*, of God made All in All.—*In 1 St. John* iii. Again, he argues: "God seeks to destroy evil, therefore evil is capable of being destroyed, and being thus capable (of destruction) it will be destroyed."—*In S. Matt.* ii. From the fact that evil resides in the will, he argues its final abolition; and that Beings who sin voluntarily, are from that very fact not essentially evil. "Let them know," says DIDYMUS, "that 'will' is not to be spoken of in those cases which pertain to substance." Therefore, even the Devils themselves are not *radically* evil; their will has been deflected, but not their substance, not their essential being. Hence all evil spirits are capable of salvation. "The Devil is not naturally evil; he has an evil will, but not an evil substance."—*In ep. St. Jud.* The following

passages shew very clearly the drift of this Father's teaching. "If penalty be an evil, it is not God but Satan who inflicts it, . . for *every thing* inflicted by God is inflicted for the sake of utility."—*Cont. Manich.* "The arm of the Devil is broken by the Lord, and his sin when sought is not found, because it comes *to an end* in being acted out, for sin is not any substance, but a quality only." . . He adds that when the Psalmist says 'the heathen shall perish off the earth,' the meaning is that "every evil passion and wicked thought perishes." The Psalmist, in praying that God may appear at the end of his enemies, means that "thus all that is evil shall come to an end."—*In Ps.* vii. 6. "When the heathen are rebuked, and their evil habits entirely cease, this is the perishing of the way of the wicked."—*In Ps.* ix. 5.

NOTE ON ANNIHILATION.

To the early writers who teach the final extinction of the wicked —(see pp. 96-7)—should be added HERMOGENES.—Neander, *Eccles. his.* ii. 350. I may point out that THEODORET (referred to by NEANDER) adds that HERMOGENES taught the final extinction of all evil spirits.—*Hær. fab. com.* i. 19. And, on the whole, I believe THEOPHILUS of Antioch, 168 A.D., to have maintained the final extinction of the wicked.—*Ad. Autol.* ii. 26-7.

CHAPTER V.

Universalism in the fourth century drove its roots down deeply, alike in the East and West, and had very many defenders.—*Dietelmaier.*—*Comm. fanat.*

The above candid admission from a writer so capable, and so hostile personally to universalism, is interesting; and suggests a few remarks, which will perhaps render clearer the present sketch of early universalism, and will at any rate break the tedium of repeated quotations. We have already noticed (p. 87) the dominant influence exercised over early Christian thought, not by Greeks (for Greece itself was singularly barren theologically), but by Eastern theology, couched in the language of the New Testament. Even at Rome the Church continued, down to the end of the second century, a Greek speaking body —reared under oriental influences—and whose earliest teachers, like CLEMENT and HERMAS, wrote in Greek, not in Latin. This influence is very marked in the writings of the Latin Fathers of the first four centuries. AMBROSE and the AMBROSIASTER, HILARY, VICTORINUS, JEROME, alike bear evident traces of the more liberal theology of the East. Doubtless to Alexandria, with its cosmopolitan culture; its varied learning; and its school of theology, at once the most antient and most famous in the world, is due the largest share in thus moulding Christian thought.

Its influence may be traced far and near. Thus when PAMPHILUS, the martyr, founded towards the end of the third century a library and school at Cæsarea, we find him giving the place of honour to the works of ORIGEN, transcribing the greater part of them with his own hand—inspired by the influence of Alexandria, where he had studied. When, again, about the same epoch, the presbyters, DOROTHEUS and LUCIAN, laid the foundation of the celebrated school of Antioch, it is significant that, though representing a healthy reaction against the allegorizing interpretations of ORIGEN, the new school retained the dogma of restoration. The same advocacy of the larger hope may be found in the famous teachers of Cappadocia, whose spiritual ancestry is to be traced to the first GREGORY, ORIGEN'S bosom friend and pupil, and so to Alexandria finally.—(p. 115).

But there is this to be noted and frankly admitted, that if Africa gave birth to a theology broad and truly Catholic in its sympathies, so it furnished, what to some may seem, the antidote. North Africa was the seat of a numerous Christian community, first rising into note under TERTULLIAN—in so many ways the spiritual ancestor of AUGUSTINE. Here, and not in Italy, was the birthplace of the Vulgate; and here, too, was the true cradle of Latin theology. Fresh and vigorous in its teachings, though narrow in the extreme, and often little cultured, the Church of

North Africa was the home of a theology cruel and remorseless in its eschatology.* Let us hear TERTULLIAN gloating and revelling over the future torments of the heathen. "How shall I admire, how LAUGH, HOW REJOICE,† HOW EXULT, when I behold so many kings, . . so many magistrates liquefying in fiercer flames than they ever kindled against Christians — so many philosophers blushing in raging fire. . . Then shall we see the tragedians more tuneful under their own sufferings; the charioteer all RED HOT in his burning car."—*De Spectac.* XXX. And when, exhausted by faction and strife, this Church fell hopelessly before the advance of Islam, the teachings of its greatest Bishop not only survived, but gained a wider sphere. Extinct in their birthplace, the cruel doctrines of AUGUSTINE flourished as a graft on the Roman stock, thence leavening by slow degrees the whole of Latin Christendom. The moment was auspicious for their success, for now the Churches of Italy were fast rising to power. The great Greek Fathers had spoken and passed away: their very language rapidly becoming unknown in the West. Thus no obstacle was left to stem the fast rising tide of Augustinianism, naturally triumphant in an

*I do not deny that here and there, out of North Africa, endless punishment was, by individuals, held and taught.

†Those who are shocked at TERTULLIAN may be reminded that the Saints can hardly disapprove, or be otherwise than pleased at, God's judgments. If such things are credible on God's part, to rejoice at them is quite natural, and right on the part of His friends; thus the heaven of the traditional creed is really as ghastly as its hell (to the thoughtful).

age cruel, corrupt, and superstitious. And so by degrees no less than a doctrinal revolution was accomplished, and the whole framework of Western theology bears to this day the imprint of Africa and its pitiless creed. The mediæval schoolman, and the modern puritan, alike wear with complacency the spiritual fetters forged at Hippo, by one who, despite his genius, never fully mastered the language of the New Testament.

Let us now turn to some Latin Fathers, whose works attest plainly this widespread influence of Eastern theology. I take first a very distinguished name, S. AMBROSE of Milan, 390 A.D. We shall see what his teaching is on the question of the divine punishment of the wicked. Their very destruction is, in his view, a mode of cure.

"Many ask an important question here, whether Holy Scripture asserts the perishing of our nature, especially because it elsewhere says: 'I will beat them small as the dust before the wind. I will *destroy* them as the mire of the streets.'—*Ps.* xviii. 42. What, then, hinders our believing that he who is beaten small as the dust is not annihilated, but is *changed for the better;* so that, instead of an earthly man, he is made a spiritual man, and our believing that he who *is destroyed, is so destroyed that all taint is removed,* and there remains but what is pure and clean. And in God's saying to the adversaries of Jerusalem, 'they shall be as though they were not,' . . you are to understand they shall exist substantially and as *converted* (to God), but shall not exist as (God's) enemies."—*En. in. Ps.* i. On the words: "I have set Thee over nations and kingdoms to root up, to destroy, to ruin, to build, and to plant." S. AMBROSE says this means CHRIST'S "destroying *every vestige of sin* . . this it is to destroy and to plant, viz., that what is sinful

should be rooted out, and what is better planted in."—*En. in Ps.* xliii.

In harmony with this, but in hopeless contradiction to every modification of the traditional creed, stands S. AMBROSE's teaching as to death. In his view, as has been well said, "sin is the great evil, while, what we call death is God's means to deliver man from the evil. But all this is directly opposed to the popular notion of future punishment, which regards the second death as hopeless torment," and death as a mere penalty.

"Why, then, do we blame death," asks S. AMBROSE, ". . if life is a burden, death is freedom; if life is a punishment, death is a *remedy*. . . In every way, then, death is good, . . because it does not change one's state for the worse. We shall find death to be the end of sin. The Lord suffered death to enter in order that guilt might cease."—*De bon. mort.* iv. "Death is a passage to better things, for if the guilty, who will not recall their steps from sin, die even against their will, yet they receive not an end of nature, but of their guilt."—*De Cain et Ab.* ii. 10. "God gave death, *not as a penalty, but as a remedy*; . . death was given for a remedy as the *end* of *evils*. . . God did not appoint death from the beginning, but gave it as a *remedy*. . . when man's life condemned to toil began to be wretched, it was right that there should have been given an end of evils, so that *death should restore* that which life had lost."—*De fid. res.*

In the next chapter we shall discuss the true meaning of the resurrection, and shall quote S. AMBROSE, and many other Fathers, as teaching that it involves restoration, as being a gift of life in CHRIST to all. Here I shall only give one passage: "CHRIST is the first fruits of *all* the dead,

all in the resurrection share a common bounty, but in a distinct order of merit"—*De fid. res.*—*i.e.*, the wicked rise *primarily to penalty, but are finally saved;* elsewhere he puts the case thus—those who do not attain to the first resurrection are burnt, *until* they complete the interval between the first and second resurrection. The next class of passages I shall quote are those in which S. AMBROSE asserts, that from its very nature sin cannot last for ever.

"That which is of the Devil is nothing, and can have no perpetuity and substance."—*De Jacob* ii. 5. "How shall the sinner exist in the future, seeing the place of sin cannot be of long continuance?"—*In Ps.* xxxvi. Again (writing of the wickedness of evil spirits): "They will not always remain, nor can their wickedness be perpetual."—*In S. Luc.* viii.

The next class of quotations consists of those, in which S. AMBROSE argues from the Divine image in man.

"For God does *not condemn His own image, nor send it into eternal fire*, but rather vindicates it from him who has done it an injury."—*In Ps.* cxix. 73. "That image may indeed be obscured, but *cannot be destroyed*, by reason of its nature" (per naturam).—*De fid. res. (frag.)* For as S. AMBROSE asks: "Shall He who has not permitted those things to perish, which belong to man's needs, permit man to perish, whom He made after His own image?"—*De fid. res.* "Because God's image is that of the one God, it like Him starts from one, and is diffused to infinity. And, once again, from an infinite number *all things return into one* as into their end, because God is both beginning and end of all things."—*Ep.* i. 1.

The closing words of the last passage state the substance of the system elaborated in detail

by the so-called DIONYSIUS (the Areopagite), and his imitators; see extracts in this chapter. We shall next quote S. AMBROSE's teaching as to the subjection of all things to CHRIST, which breathes the very spirit of universalism.

"How then shall all things be subject to CHRIST? In this very way in which the Lord Himself said: 'Take my yoke upon you.' For it is not the untamed who bear the yoke, but the humble and gentle, . . so that in Jesus's name every knee shall bend." . . S. AMBROSE asserts that subjection to CHRIST is loving submission, and that in this sense *all* must become CHRIST's subjects. He proceeds to discuss CHRIST's subjection to the Father. "Is this subjection of CHRIST now completed? Not at all. Because the subjection of CHRIST consists not in a few, *but in all* (becoming obedient) . . CHRIST will be subject to God in us by means of the obedience of all, when, vices having been cast away, and sin reduced to submission, one spirit of all people shall with one accord begin to cleave to God: then God will be All in All; . . when all, then, shall have believed and done the will of God, CHRIST will be All and in All; and when CHRIST shall be All in All, (then) God will be All in All."—*De fid. lib.* v. *c.* viii. Again, on *Ps.* cxix., 91: "For all things serve Thee;" he says, "At present we do not all serve God. But, when CHRIST shall have delivered His kingdom over to God, then shall all things be subject to Him who has subjected the universe to Himself; acquiring the faith of *all*, through the passion of His only begotten Son; . . when, therefore, *all* shall have believed in the Lord, then shall the universe serve God, so that He may be *All and in All.*" "By a profound design the Apostle declares that CHRIST shall be subject to the Father in us, when there shall exist in all the fullness of faith. . . At present He is over all by His power, but it is necessary that He be in *all* by their free will."—*In Ps.* lxi.

S. AMBROSE, I may add, teaches that the sin

against the Holy Ghost may be forgiven.—*De pœn.* ii. 4. Lastly, the following passages show clearly the tone of his theology.

"The mystery of the Incarnation is the salvation of the entire creation, . . as it is elsewhere said, "the *whole creation* shall be set free from the bondage of corruption.'"—*De fide lib. v. ch.* iv. "The Father has committed all judgment to CHRIST; shall then He be able to condemn thee for whom He gave Himself? Will not He say, what use is there in My blood if I condemn him whom I have saved?"—*De Jacob.* "All nations shall come and worship before Thee, to see Thy nuptials, O Jesu . . for all flesh shall come to Thee, no longer subject to the world, but united to the spirit."—*De fid. res.* "The mercy of the Lord is to all flesh, in order that *all flesh* may ascend to the Lord."—*In Ps.* cxix. *Ser.* xx. "So the Son of man came to save that which was lost, *i.e., all,* for as in Adam *all* die, so in CHRIST shall all be made alive."—*In S. Luc.* xv.

I next proceed to quote an early and able writer (not certainly identified), whose works are usually bound with those of S. AMBROSE. He, as already shewn (p. 102-3), teaches clearly the liberation of all souls by CHRIST from Hades. Let us take some specimens of his teaching.

"This seemed good to God to manifest in CHRIST the mystery of His will, . . namely, that He should be merciful to all who had strayed, whether in heaven or in earth (*i.e.,* fallen angels or men.) . . *Every being, then,* in the heavens and on earth, while it learns the knowledge of CHRIST, *is being restored to that which it was created.*"—*In Eph.* i. 9-10. "CHRIST rose that He might create anew once more those things which He had first made; . . that He should restore all those things which He (God) made through Him . . and *all things* that have been made by Him should live in Him as in their Author"—

(compare VICTORINUS' teaching already quoted).—*In Col.* i. 20. "In speaking of the whole Church (reading *omnem ecclesiam),* the Apostle summarily comprehends the *totality of that which exists in heaven and on earth* . . for when they shall have returned to the confession of one God, bending the knee to CHRIST, He is fulfilled in all, so as to be all, for all comes from Him."—*In Eph.* i. A striking passage is the following, recalling VICTORINUS again: "The creation was formed by God through CHRIST, so that . . it should be as it were a chain linked together *(concatenatio),* descending in ordered arrangement to the firmament, so as to form a *united whole* . . This, then, is the point aimed at, that the creation *(creatura)* may be brought back to one mind . . so that it may be harmonious in love of the Creator. . . For it is rebuilding itself into a temple of the Lord."—*In Eph.* iv. On 1 *Cor.* xv. 27, this writer says: "When every creature learns that CHRIST is its head, and that CHRIST's head is God the Father, then God is All in All; that is to say, that *every creature* should believe alike, that with one voice *every* tongue of things in heaven and earth and under the earth, should confess that there is one God from whom are all things." The following is interesting on CHRIST's enemies being made His footstool: "They are made to bow under His feet who return to the Lord, and as a footstool to the feet so are bent to His preaching. Without doubt this is said of those enemies who, having been corrected, are set on His right hand."—*In Heb.* i. 13. "All things have been put under His feet, . . so that (meaning that) *every created thing* should duly worship Him; . . for it became Him through whom are all things, and on account of whom are all things, to *complete the salvation of all things.*" —*In Heb.* ii. "The Father has granted to the Son that, after the Crucifixion, all things should be saved in the name of the Son."—*In Phil.* ii. 10.

In S. AMBROSE's works is generally printed a treatise—*De Sacramentis,* assigned by most critics

to a contemporary, or it may be, a later author. It is of interest as further tending to shew the current beliefs of Christian antiquity. "God," it teaches, "desiring to undo everything hurtful, sentenced man to death. . . It was assigned as a *remedy* that man should die and rise again: . . death interposing puts a stop to sin. . . CHRIST brought in the resurrection: . . we have on our side both *(i.e.*, death and resurrection), because death ends sin, and resurrection is a remoulding of our nature."—*lib.* ii. ch. 6. "What, then, is the resurrection except our rising from death to life."—*ib.* iii. 1. These words are in harmony with a very large body of primitive teaching (as my readers can see), and are in complete antagonism to the views now general, in their drift and tendency.

Our next witness shall be one who is, with the exception of S. AUGUSTINE, the most striking figure among the Latin Fathers; one to whom in learning and in critical acumen S. AUGUSTINE cannot for a moment be compared—I mean S. JEROME. It is impossible not to pause as we survey these two great contemporaries, who corresponded, indeed, but never met. In JEROME are represented the tendencies, broad and sympathetic, of Eastern theology (already beginning to wane.) In AUGUSTINE are summed up the cruel dogmas of the rising school of North Africa. In a true sense S. JEROME is the last of a long line of Latin Fathers, drawing their

inspiration from Eastern sources.—S. AUGUSTINE is the founder of a new theological dynasty. Some specimens, which I shall give, may show how strongly S. JEROME wrote in favour of universalism *in its extremest form.*

"CHRIST will, in the ages to come, show, not to one, but to the *whole number of rational creatures,* His glory, and the riches of His grace, by means of us (Christians). . . The saints are to reign over the *fallen angels, and the prince of this world, Lucifer, . . even to them bringing blessing.* . .—*In Eph.* ii. 7. Most explicit and outspoken is the following:—"In the end of all things the whole body which has been dissipated and torn into divers parts shall be restored. . . Let us understand the *whole number of rational creatures* under the figure of a single body; . . let us imagine this body to be torn . . in pieces, and then suppose some wonderful physician to come and restore to its place every part. . . So in the restitution of all things, when the true physician, JESUS CHRIST, shall have come to heal the body of the Church, *every one* . . shall receive his proper place. . . What I mean is, the *fallen angel will begin to be that which he was created,* and *man,* who has been expelled from Paradise, *will be once more restored to the tilling of Paradise.* These things, then, will take place *universally.*"—*In Eph.* iv. 16. Again, S. JEROME says expressly, "With God *no rational creature perishes eternally.*"—*In Gal.* v. 20. "For God pities his creature, and will not suffer those whom He himself *has formed to perish eternally.* . . Seeing, then, that the spirit comes from God, . . *it is not just that they should perish eternally* who are sustained by His breath and spirit."—*In Is.* lvii. 6. In another place he writes: "Death shall come *as a visitor to the impious;* it will *not be perpetual;* it will not annihilate them; but will prolong its visit, *till the impiety which is in them shall be consumed.*"—*In Mic.* v. 8. Again, speaking of the consummation of all things, S. JEROME says, on *Zeph.* iii. 10: "The prophet, here aware of the extent of God's mercy, is like the Psalmist communing with his heart and

asking, 'will the Lord cast off for ever?' of which the meaning is—I did think God would abandon sinners for ever, but now I perceive that it was all done for this end, . . to *change everything*, and that he might *shew mercy* on those whom *he had before* cast away." "In the Cross and Passion of the Lord, all things have been summed up." He goes on to show what this means. "It is," he says, "as though one were to lend 100 pence in various sums and get all back in one sum." In other words, CHRIST is to get back all things."—*In Eph.* i. 10. To this idea he returns: "The Cross of CHRIST has benefited not earth only but heaven, and *every creature* has been cleansed by the blood of the Lord."—*ib.* c. ii. And on *ch.* iii. 14, he teaches clearly that "by every knee bending in JESUS' name is meant 'the obedience of the heart.'" "CHRIST is subject to the Father in those who are faithful, for all who believe, nay, *all the race of man is counted as His members.* But in those who are unbelievers, Jews, heathen, and heretics, CHRIST is said not to be subject, because a part of his members is not subject to the faith. But in the end of the world, when all His members shall have seen CHRIST, *i.e.*, their own body, reigning, they, too, shall be subject to CHRIST, *i.e.*, to their own body, so that the *whole body of Christ* may be subject to God and the Father, that God may be All in All."—*Ep. ad Amen.* This involves the final obedience of all, and teaches that Jews, heathen, and heretics are Christ's members.

No language can be more explicit than the foregoing; nor are these isolated instances: I have found *nearly 100 passages* in his works (and there are doubtless others) indicating S. JEROME'S sympathy with universalism, and how largely it enters into his system of teaching. Other passages of similar tone will be found in the next chapter. And, further, we

should note that when towards the year 400 A.D., S. JEROME took part with EPIPHANIUS and the disreputable THEOPHILUS, against ORIGEN (whom he had hitherto extravagantly praised), he, as HUET points out—*Orig.* iii. 25—kept a significant silence on the question of human restoration. Thus, in his *Ep. ad Avit.*, where he goes at length into ORIGEN'S errors, he says *nothing of this point; and when first charged with Origenism, he refers, twice over, to his commentaries on Ephesians, which teach the most outspoken Universalism.* Certain it is that his works abound in universalistic teaching, direct and indirect. I proceed to quote :—

On *Amos.* ix. 2, we have this vivid (and *significant)* description of the fate of the sinful soul *after death* : "If despairing of safety, it shall try to avoid the eye of the Lord, and to fly to the utmost limits, . . even there shall the Lord command the old and crooked Serpent, the enemy and avenger, and he shall bite it ; . . it shall also be smitten by the sword of the Lord, . . in order that, by means of tortures and punishment, it may *return to the Lord.*" On *Nahum* c. ii., this striking comment occurs : At the end of the world Satan and his hosts shall fly in terror to the end of the world. . . "Now while they (the Devil and his hosts) are thinking over this, *every thing* that they have captured shall be brought forward *(i.e.*, rescued). Further, *all the substance of the world*, and *all its servants*, after they have submitted themselves to CHRIST, . . shall be led along in joy and gladness. . And then shall be fulfilled that which is spoken (*Ps.* lxviii. 18) of the Saviour's victory, when ascending on high : 'He led captivity captive.'" Here is taught the final liberation from Satan of all his captives. In this spirit this Father says that CHRIST'S final coming is "to destroy *sins*" (not sinners). And so "at the consummation of the world, every creature shall have been set free."—*In Hab.* iii.

S. JEROME's teaching as to God's vengeance and destruction of His enemies (as meaning their conversion) may be seen in the passages which I shall quote in the next chapter. In the same spirit he writes—

"What shall I do to thee Ephraim? . . I will destroy thee unto dust and ashes. And when the harsh, nay, cruel sentence has been passed, the Father's love appeases the austerity of the Judge, for I do ***not strike in order to destroy for ever,*** but in order to ***amend.***"—*In Hos.* xii. On *Joel* ii., where the day of the Lord (of judgment) is said to come with devouring fire, S. JEROME writes of its meaning as, "that all the inhabitants of the world may be confounded, and their confusion may bring them ***to salvation.***" On *Joel* iii. 14: "The Jews think the original word may be translated, not only 'judgment' but 'gold,' meaning that in the valley of judgment, which they believe to be Gehenna, the taint of sins being purged away, thou (the sinner) mayest remain pure gold"—suggestive words. On *Zech.* xii. 9: "He will destroy, not for their ruin, but for ***their amendment***; . . for if He created all things out of nothing, He did not do that in order to destroy that which He had created, but in order that by His mercy the things created should be saved."

From an early writer (not certainly identified), whose commentary on the *Psalms* is bound with S. JEROME's works, I quote some passages, in their drift and tone, wholly breathing the larger hope.

Thus, on the destruction of God's enemies, he writes: "When the Psalmist says, 'Thine enemies, O God, shall perish,' . . ***every one*** who has been thine enemy shall ***hereafter be made thy friend;*** the man shall not perish, the enemy shall perish. He who was an enemy shall be thy friend, and so the enemy shall perish."—*In Ps.* xci. These are very significant words. No less striking is the comment on *Ps.* ix. v: "Thou hast blotted out their name ***for ever and ever.***" This Father says, in effect, that it means blotting out their sins

and *their turning to God. Here an eternal blotting out is amending.* So again: "The Devil is, as it were, God's executioner. They who walk not rightly are handed over to the Devil. Wherefore? That they may perish eternally? And where then is the mercy of God? Where is the tender Father? What the Apostle says is this, I have handed over sinners to the Devil, that, tormented by him, they may be converted to me."—*In Ps.* cvii. On the words, "His wrath will soon be kindled"—*Ps.* ii. 12—this Father (reading *in brevi*), says: "This means at the death of every one, or, with a *brief wrath,* at the Day of Judgment, as that (verse means) 'sudden destruction shall come on them.'" This involves the opinion that the sudden destruction of the wicked, to which S. PAUL refers, would be satisfied by a *brief wrath* at the Day of Judgment. A significant passage holds out hope of pardon even to Satan. "Thou who wast first a dragon . . Look what the Psalmist says . . Do thou *not* then despair, *repent* and *straightway thou art converted.*"—*In Ps.* cxlviii.

Nor should the name of DIODORUS, 378 A.D., of Tarsus, be absent from the roll of early universalists. He was one of the greatest ornaments of the famous school of Antioch, with whose teaching we are now to make acquaintance. In his lifetime he was noted for zeal in defence of the Nicene Creed, and died in universal honour; having, says THEODORET, saved the bark of the Church from being submerged under the waves of unbelief. Of his numerous writings but little has survived. The following is from his book *De æcon.*: "For the wicked there are punishments not perpetual, . . but they are to be tormented for a certain brief period, . . according to the amount of malice in their works. They shall therefore suffer punishment for a short space, but *immortal blessedness*, having no end

awaits them; . . the penalties to be inflicted for their many and grave crimes are very far surpassed by the magnitude of the mercy to be shewed them. The resurrection, therefore, is regarded as a blessing not only to the good but also to the evil."

We may next note that RUFINUS, 390 A.D., certainly taught that the future punishment of the wicked would be *temporary*, in his exposition of the Creed. There he contrasts the *perpetuity* of glory of the just, with a (merely) lengthy punishment of the wicked. There remain two other facts by which we may ascertain RUFINUS' views. In his preface to ORIGEN—*De prin.*, he states, in effect, that he had removed what was "discordant with our belief" from that book. But he certainly left there very distinct assertions of universalism. Again, it seems impossible to doubt that in his work on the Creed, he taught the liberation from Hades of all souls by CHRIST.

And here I may quote briefly from a book, which seems to belong to another RUFINUS (Syrus), a disciple of S. JEROME. "God, for the good of men, permitted them *for a time* to be subject to the rule of death."—*De fide. c.* XXXV. He goes on to use language about death as "the destruction of wickedness," and as good both to the just and unjust, which is similar to that noted in S. AMBROSE and so many others; and which is very significant. Death is said to be

good, according to RUFINUS, to the evil, as a "destruction of their depravity."—*Ch.* xxxiii.

I quote next from S. PAULINUS, Bishop of Nola, 393 A.D. (not attempting to decide what he at heart believed). PAULINUS' brother DELPHINUS, seems to have died in sin: so far from abandoning his case as quite hopeless, PAULINUS begs S. AMANDUS to pray for him, because "*doubtless* the dew of God's indulgence will penetrate hell *(inferna)*, so that those burning there . . may be refreshed."—*Epis. ad Am.* He, too, teaches significantly that the destruction of the heathen by CHRIST is really their *cure.* His iron rod "breaks their hearts as though vessels formed of clay, in order to remake them (for the) better."—How far this principle logically goes—for CHRIST is to have possession of the whole earth—any one can judge.—*Par. of Ps.* ii. "Those whom the Creator formed in one work, he creates over again by one gift: a common disobedience shut up all, in order that faith might heal the whole; so that all the world may be made God's servant."—*Carm. Ad Cyth.*

I take next S. CHRYSOSTOM; trained in the school of Antioch, a pupil of DIODORUS of Tarsus, his education can hardly have been otherwise than universalistic in character. And when all the evidence is fairly weighed, I think that hardly any doubt can remain, as to his very strong sympathy with, or, indeed, adoption of the larger

hope; notwithstanding his apparent teaching of the ordinary creed. For, on the theory of his really holding that creed, I can find no explanation* of such passages as I shall quote ; while his threats of future punishment, however terrible, may be easily explained (I.) as coming from a great preacher in cities stained with horrible and nameless vices, like Antioch or Constantinople—*e.g.*, *see Hom.* ix. *on Rom.* v.—(II) by the rhetorical and ambiguous character of the terms used (III.) by the notorious advocacy of deceit—*apate*—as a spiritual medicine, which we find in his works. Let us therefore try to gather his views from his own words. Writing on *Rom.* v. 16 *(Ser.* x.), he uses language quite inconsistent with the perpetuation of evil in hell. S. PAUL is speaking of the result of CHRIST'S work ; on this CHRYSOSTOM comments as follows :

"By this is inevitably shewn that death is plucked up root and branch ; . . not only was the sin (of Adam) *abolished,* but *also all other sins whatsoever.*" . . Of death "*not a trace remains,* nor *can its shadow* be discerned, as it is *utterly* destroyed." Again, on the words : God shall be 'All in All' he says : "Some maintain that the Apostle asserts here the *abolition of evil,* so that *all* shall henceforth willingly yield (to God), and *not one resist or be under the power of* evil, for when sin shall no longer exist, it is evident that God will be All in All."† So far

*We may note, too, the fact that he was undoubtedly charged with a leaning to Origenism in the controversy between JEROME (and EPIPHANIUS), and JOHN of Jerusalem. Again, he sanctions prayers and almsgiving on behalf of those who have died in sin (*i.e.*, unrepentant).—*In S. Jno. Ser.* xli. *In 1 Cor. Serm.* xli.

†"CHRYSOSTOM," says HERTZOG, "holds this view, *i.e.*, 'restitution' —as appears from his comment on *1 Cor.* xv."—*Encycl.* i.

from stating any objection to this view, he closes his comment with these words: "For when *evil has been taken away*, much more shall death cease." Compare this Father's comment on *Heb.* x. (*Hom.* xvii): "While sin is expecting to be able to carry off all, it has *itself been carried off*" (abolished). The abolition of sin is surely a synonym for the larger hope. And so, on *Col.* 1 (*Ser.* iii), where the Apostle is speaking of CHRIST as first creating all things, and then reconciling *all things*, CHRYSOSTOM says that it was needful that He should reconcile them "*perfectly*, so that they should *never again* become His enemies."

I cannot see any escape from the conclusion that these words involve universalism (in this comment S. CHRYSOSTOM also identifies the Church with *the entire human race).* Again, on *Eph.* i., this Father says: All, angels and men are to be brought under one head.

"Then shall there be a unity when *all things* (the universe) shall have been brought under one head, having a necessary bond of connection from above." On. *S. Jno.* xii. 32: "'I will draw all men unto me.' Had CHRIST said, 'I will rise,' it is not clear that He would have implied that they (all) would believe, but in saying that they shall believe, He combines both."

The following extracts again teach a view of 'vengeance' and 'penalty' and 'death,' which is in a high degree significant. To me such teaching seems to point clearly in the direction of the larger hope.

"Tell me on what account do you mourn for him that is departed? Is it because he was wicked? But for that very reason you ought to give thanks, because his evil works are put a stop to."—*De dorm. Serm* xxx. "Death has been ordered for our *benefit* by the Lord,

. . for this is His wont that in His vengeance (*timoria*) no less than in His benefits, He shews His care of us. . Had He known that impunity would make us no worse, He never would have inflicted vengeance on us. . . To extirpate our wickedness, He kindly inflicts vengeance." *In Gen.* iii. *Hom.* xviii. "If punishment were an evil to those who sin, God never would have added evils to evils. . It is, then, no evil to the offender to be punished, but that one so acting should not be punished (is an evil), *just as for a sick man not to be cured.*"—*In Rom.* ch. v. "God is *equally* to be praised when he chastises, and when he frees from chastisement. For both spring from goodness. . . It is right, then, to give thanks, not alone for the kingdom (of God), but for *hell as well* (Gehenna)."—*In Ps.* cxlviii. Note, too, the following: "What great goodness did it not shew to restrain from sin those who, at the time of the Deluge, were *incurably* diseased, to employ, as a medicine, the common debt of nature, and to bring on them the easiest death by water."—*In Ps.* clxiv. "God speaks by the Prophet representing His penalties (*timoria*—vengeance) as benefits, 'I smote them as I smote Sodom and Gomorrha.' . . God does all things through love, as, *e.g.*, to benefit man He set him in Paradise, and to benefit him he turned him out of Paradise. . To benefit him he sent that fire on Sodom."—*In Ps.* cx.

The drift of S. CHRYSOSTOM's teaching is further shewn by his attitude toward the so-called unpardonable sin, as quite capable of pardon. *Many*, though guilty of it were, he tells us, pardoned subsequently on their repentance.—*In S. Matt.* xii. *Ser.* lxii. Again, I may appeal to his very clear assertion of the liberation of *every soul whatsoever* from Hades by CHRIST, and of the subversion of Hades itself in consequence. I give a summary of his striking words: "CHRIST so utterly broke down Hades as to render it

incapable of detaining any prisoners henceforth, *whoever enters he is not detained.* What God destroys, who can set up again ? Earthly kings indeed set free prisoners, yet leave untouched the prison gates ; but CHRIST broke in pieces the gates of brass. CHRIST went to the utterly black and joyless portion of Hades, and turned it into Heaven, transferring *all* its wealth, the *race of man*, into His royal treasury. In this, too, CHRIST surpasses kings, for they send messengers, but He went in person to set the captives free." —*De cœm. et cruce. Ser.* xxxiv. So, again, he says : "Our Lord, when He was in Hades, set free *all* who were kept prisoners by death."—*In Ps.* cxlv.

We now come to the famous THEODORE of Mopsuestia, 407 A.D., who enjoyed during his lifetime an extraordinary renown as a teacher of the Catholic faith. "He was," says DORNER, "the crown and climax of the school of Antioch, and was called the Master of the East from his theological eminence."* "From THEODORE'S

*THEODORE and (perhaps) DIODORUS, after they had rested for a century and a quarter in their honoured graves, were condemned as *Nestorians* in the Fifth Council, an assembly unrecognised by the English Church. *No question of universalism was thereby raised*, for the very promoters of this Council *were Origenists* and intrigued against THEODORE on the *very ground of his hostility to* ORIGEN. That DIODORUS was condemned is uncertain, for though PHOTIUS states that he was, his name does *not occur* in the Acts of the Council. Certain it is that (1) THEODORE towered above his contemporaries, certain, too (2), that such posthumous attacks by Councils of very doubtful authority are most often rooted in paltry jealousy and intrigue. (3). And it is a painful reflection to compare the impunity enjoyed by those who blacken the divine *character* (*e.g.*, S. AUGUSTINE) with the sharp

fundamental principles it necessarily follows," says NEANDER, "that he must have extended the restoration, to fallen spirits, as well as to mankind." THEODORE teaches "that in the world to come those who have done evil all their life long, will be made worthy of the sweetness of the Divine bounty. For never would CHRIST have said, 'Until thou hast paid the uttermost farthing,' unless it were possible for us to be cleansed when we have paid the debt." "Death and corruption shall come to an end, all things being brought back to one harmony, as S. PAUL wrote to the *Rom.* viii. 18-23." Again, S. PAUL, he argues, speaks of the Resurrection as a boon. "But how can it be a blessing if a penalty, without any design of amendment, be allotted to them that rise? Who *is so great a fool* as to think, that so great a blessing can be

measure meted, too often, to those great men; who (as in THEODORE'S case), *before* the Church has defined the point at issue, write incautiously, it may be (but moved with zeal for the truth) about the divine *nature*. (4). HUET has the candour to confess that, if the mere teaching, or originating heresy, unconsciously, and with a readiness to abjure it, (as distinguished from persisting in it when the Church has once spoken), make a heretic, then *very many Orthodox Fathers, e.g.*, CYPRIAN, IRENÆUS, &c., *may be called heretics.—Orig.* ii. c. iii. And it is (5) certain, too, that, as his latest editor says, "Every accession to our knowledge of THEODORE adds strength to the conviction, that he was *entirely unconscious of deviating from the Catholic Church.*" (6). And to talk of *heretics* is ground most unsafe for the advocates of endless sin. That dogma bears a deeply tarnished escutcheon. Who was its first distinguished advocate?—the heretic TERTULLIAN. What were the authors of the Pseudo-Clementines?—heretics, and forgers, and teachers of unending pain? What was TATIAN, another very early champion of this doctrine?—a Gnostic heretic. What was LACTANTIUS?—an ill-taught layman, 'hovering ever on the verge of heresy. And who is the true fountain and source of the cruel heresy of CALVIN?—no less a name than AUGUSTINE himself. And what was PELAGIUS?—an arch-heretic, and a champion of misery without end.

to those that arise, the occasion of endless torment ?"—*Frag.* iv. *(Migne S. Jer.)* What is the power of His resurrection ? since it was made for *all*, in order that even *all* should attain to a like resurrection. By sharing it, *i.e.*, an immortal and impassible nature, I shall be free from all sin."—*In Phil.* iii.

CYRIL of Alexandria, 412 A.D., frequently teaches the liberation of *every soul* from Hades by CHRIST. I may add to the passages already quoted in this chapter these: "Hades vomited forth those whom it had captured."—*Hom. pasch.* ii. "The devil was deprived of the power of being able to do anything for the future. . The souls of men who had been caught in his toils to their ruin, came out of the underground gates, and, leaving the hiding-places of the pit, escaped." —*ib.* vi. "God condemned sin and death in order that He might recall all to their original life. . Therefore, having despoiled Hades, and having emptied every recess of the devil, He rose."—*ib.* viii. "Traversing the lowest recesses of the infernal regions, after that He had preached to the spirits there, He led forth the captives in His strength.—*ib.* xx. For when death devoured Him who was the Lamb on behalf of all, it vomited forth *all men* in him and with him. . . Now when *sin has been destroyed*, how should it be but that death, too, should wholly perish ? . . 'For *all* iniquity,' as the Psalmist says, 'shall stop her mouth.'"—*In Ps.* cvi. "CHRIST died in

order that, by his own blood He might obtain from God the Father both those living, and those whom death has already devoured."—*In Zeph.* iii. From this last passage does it not follow logically that, since CHRIST obtained *all* the dead, as CYRIL teaches, so He must obtain all those living after His Passion? I do not represent CYRIL as a consistent teacher, (nor will I decide what his real views may have been), but the passages quoted, and those to follow, certainly deserve to receive great weight. I may quote further—

"Sin has been dissolved (done away) for the evil that has grown out of it, death, has been plucked up as though with its very root."—*Hom. pasch.* xxiv. "God saved the universe and snatched it from the Devil's power."—*In Ps.* xcvi. When CHRIST breaks the vessels (men) with a rod of iron, and dashes them in pieces, it is, says CYRIL, "not in order to destroy but to remould them," a view of destruction quite inconsistent with the traditional creed.—*In Ps.* ii. "God will condemn the Beast, the author of sin, and send him into ceaseless fire, but will set free those who have fallen under his power" (men). "By the hundred sheep are to be understood the whole number of rational beings subject to God (a hundred indicating perfection). Now of the hundred, one strayed, the race on earth, which the Chief Shepherd sought out, having left in the desert (in the heavenly fold), the ninety-nine. . . This one being brought back (*i.e.*, all *mankind*), the number of one hundred is beautifully complete."—*In S. Luc.* xv.—words that seem clearly to involve the larger hope. Again, he writes: "The Father called the universe into being through CHRIST; . . so, too, has CHRIST saved it. . . What, then, did He save? *Manifestly everything under heaven.*"—*Ex Corder.* (*Migne*). On the death of CHRIST, "all iniquity stopped its mouth, all sin (*tes. hamartias*, sin generally) having been taken away, . . so, then, the sin of all having been taken away, we can say, 'O death where is thy sting.'"—*In Hos.* xiii.

In S. AMBROSE's works (Paris, 1569), there are included ninety-two sermons, which are not his, but may be by MAXIMUS of Turin, 422 A.D. The author seems to teach (I.) the liberation of every soul from Hades, and (II.) to take the significant view of God's inflicting death to amend the sinner. "By the resurrection of CHRIST, hell—*Tartarus*—is opened, . . hell yields up those it contains; . . so David invites everything created to the festivity of this day." —*Ser.* lii. "He must of necessity have destroyed the sin of all, who bore the sins of all, as says the Evangelist: 'The Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world.'"—*ib.* xxi. "This is CHRIST's *whole severity* towards men who are His possession, viz., that their sins be punished, the soul be saved. . We have, then, a physician who in smiting heals; who in putting to death makes alive."—*Ser.* xxvii.

I take next THEODORET, the Blessed, 423 A.D. This great Father was, I cannot doubt, a universalist. He became Bishop of Cyrus, in Syria, and is the last representative, that we shall quote, of the school of Antioch, (where he was born). THEODORET was perhaps the most famous, and certainly by far the most learned teacher of his age; uniting to a noble intellect a character and accomplishments equally noble. In many passages he speaks of the resurrection as being of itself restoration; as not merely a bodily but essentially a spiritual force, bringing to man's

whole nature immortality, and, therefore, immunity from sufferings; a view supported, as we shall see in the next chapter, by very many Fathers, but surely fatal to all forms of the traditional creed.

S. PAUL, asserting that 'the last enemy to be destroyed is death,' and that 'He hath put all things under CHRIST's feet,' adds finally '*in order that God may be All in All.*' . . In the present life God is in all, for His nature is without limits. . But in the future, when (by the Resurrection) mortality is at an end and immortality granted, and (consequently) sin has no longer any place, God will be All in All..'—*In Eph.* i. 23. "For CHRIST has *wholly destroyed* the power of sin by His promise of *immortality;* for it (sin) *cannot trouble immortal* bodies."—*In Heb.* ix 25. Writing on 1 *Cor.* xv. 26, he says: "That in the future life when corruption is at an end, and immortality granted, there is no place for suffering, but it (suffering) being *totally removed, no form of sin remains at work.* So shall God be All in All, *all things* being out of danger of falling, and *converted to Him.*" "When our bodies rise immortal, and there shall no more be left any room for sin, but sin having been taken out of the way, . . . labours and toils shall cease."—*Hær. fab. comp.* v. 21. "In the future life the body, when it has been made incorruptible, cannot admit the filth of sin."—*In Col.* ii. 11.

I give next the substance of a lengthy comment. On *1 Cor.* xi.: "The whole nature of man (all humanity) shall follow CHRIST, and share the resurrection (which to THEODORET is itself restoration). No doubt there shall be a difference between good and bad, and so the Apostle writes: 'Every one in his own order' (meaning probably a delayed resurrection till

judgment has done its cleansing work). Then comes the end. "Death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed; and, after the devil and his hosts shall have been sent into outer darkness, then all the dead shall rise, and death be vanquished, for He hath put all things under His feet." This THEODORET explains of CHRIST'S making *all* things like His glorious body. He refers to *Ph.* iii. 21 (which I have elsewhere discussed): "CHRIST shall adorn with immortality our corruptible bodies, . . causing *all* to look up to Himself."

In the same spirit THEODORET writes: "CHRIST being taken as 'first fruits,' the whole nature of man (all humanity) shall know the true God, and chant praises for his loving kindness."—*In Ps.* lxxix. "Afterwards the Psalmist speaks more plainly: 'All the kings of the earth shall adore Him.' Some, indeed, in the present life willingly, but all the rest after the resurrection; for not yet do we see *all things* subject to Him, but then every knee shall bow to Him."—*In Ps.* lxxi. Here the context shews "all kings" to be used for "all things," and the subjection of all to CHRIST, is in THEODORET'S view their submission and adoration.

Finally, on two other points, let us note his teaching. (I.) He explicitly asserts the liberation from Hades of every soul. "Thou," says CHRIST to Satan, "art justly despoiled of *all* thy subjects. . Thou shalt vomit forth *all* that thou hast already swallowed. . . I shall free *all* from death, . . for I paid the debt for the *race*. . As the debt has been paid, it is right that those confined on account of it should be set free from their prison."—*De Prov. Or.* x. (II.) He teaches that *death is a cure, not a*

penalty.—Ques. in Gen. xl., and even goes a great deal farther, for he says, that to imagine that God, in anger at a little eating, inflicted death as a penalty, is to copy the abominable (heretic) MARCION. This statement I commend to my readers' attention. Those who fancy God to have so acted, show, says THEODORET, their ignorance of the mystery of the dispensation. "So then this penalty comes *not* from wrath, but is a dispensation of the highest wisdom." Can this teaching be reconciled with any modification of the traditional creed? Take, finally, the following: "*After* His anger, God will bring to an end His judgment; for He will not be angry unto the end, nor keep His wrath to eternity."—*In Is.* xii.

From S. PETER-CHRYSOLOGUS, 433 A.D. (so-called from his eloquence), Bishop of Ravenna, I take the following, which refers to the great gulf separating Lazarus and Dives. "Those assigned to penal custody in Hades cannot be transferred to the repose of the saints, *unless*, having been redeemed by the grace of CHRIST, they be freed from this hopelessness by the intercession of the Holy Church: so that what the sentence denies them, the Church may gain for them and grace bestow."—*Ser.* cxxiii.—suggestive words, coming from one who uses elsewhere such strong language as to the fate of the lost. Again, explaining the words, "Thy kingdom come," he says: "We thus pray for the coming of that

time when the author of so great evil (Satan) perishing, the *whole world*, the *whole creation*, may reign and triumph for the whole glory of CHRIST only."—*Ser.* lxxi. "We pray that the devil may perish, that sin may cease, death may die. . This is the kingdom of God, . . when in all men God lives, God acts."—*Ser.* lxvii. This seems to involve an anticipation that all evil shall in the future wholly cease. In this spirit, he says on the parable of the leaven: "In order that, as a woman had corrupted the whole mass of the human race in Adam, by the leaven of death, so (a woman) should restore in CHRIST *the whole mass of our flesh*" (all humanity?)—*Ser.* xcix. On the parable of the hundred sheep he says, that the one lost sheep represents "*the whole human race lost in Adam*," and so the Good Shepherd "follows the one, seeks the one, in order that in the one He may find *all*, in the one He may restore *all*."—*Ser.* clxviii. Is not this to teach the larger hope? I may finally cite a striking passage on the raising of LAZARUS. HADES, personified, is represented as saying: "If I permit LAZARUS to escape, I lose *all* whom I have been keeping." CHRIST answers: "I, O Father, will pay Adam's debt, in order that those who, through Adam, are perishing in Hades, may, through Me, live to Thee." On this the whole Trinity consent. And LAZARUS is ordered to leave the tomb, and "hell (Tartarus) was ordered to obey, and give up to CHRIST *all the dead*."—*Ser.* lxv. Surely these teachings involve universalism.

To the evidence already given may be added the language of several of the ancient Liturgies, in which prayer is offered, not alone for the faithful departed, but for *all* the dead, and for the salvation of the human race.

Thus in the liturgy, bearing the name of S. BASIL, are these words: "O Lord our God, remember all Thy people, and pour out *on all* men Thy rich mercy, granting *to all* their petitions unto *salvation*. . . Be Thou Thyself *all* things to *all* men." In the liturgy of S. MARUTHAS are these words: "Remember, O Lord, by Thy grace *all* those who, by means of the sentence pronounced against our first father, Adam, have departed out of this miserable life, and are gone where Thou only knowest; . . give them *rest* among the delights," &c. Note how comprehensive is this prayer, and how completely it is in harmony with the larger hope for all men. Again, in the liturgy which bears S. CHRYSOSTOM'S name, CHRIST is addressed as having "brought the *whole* world into His net," "we offer to Thee this reasonable service for the whole world." I give next a few brief sentences from the Malabar liturgy —CHRIST is said to "*quicken the whole world.*" Again, God is entreated "to have mercy on *all* creatures; and the oblation is offered for the benefit of all men." In the liturgy of S. CLEMENT, it is said in very suggestive phrase that God subjected man "for a while to a temporary death," and "has bound Himself with an oath to restore him to life again," and that CHRIST came to deliver all men from the impending wrath. The Armenian liturgy prays to CHRIST, as having "borne and cancelled the sin of all; as having by His Cross *renewed all creatures*" (*Rom.* viii. 19-23). And to this day, in the Mass, each Roman Catholic priest offers *pro totius mundi salute.* The liturgy of the Holy Apostles prays thus: "Have mercy on *all creatures*, that all the inhabitants of the earth may know Thee." The liturgy of S. JAMES has these prayers: "Visit *Thy world* in mercy and

compassion; remember, O Lord, the spirits and *all flesh;* give them rest," etc. Elsewhere it says: "CHRIST appeared for the salvation of the race," "for all men and all women." The Ethiopic liturgy says: "We render thanks *de omnibus, pro omnibus, et in omnibus.*"

I will now ask my readers to consider another very important piece of evidence. Within the first five centuries, the two great Creeds—the Apostles' and the Niceno—Constantinopolitan, received their present form, and the first four General Councils were held at Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon. Now it is a highly significant fact, that though universalist views were then widely prevalent, no syllable of condemnation was breathed against them at any of these councils. Nobody ever thought of including amongst the articles of the faith a belief in endless punishment; and this, be it remembered, though *the very question of the life to come was distinctly raised* at Constantinople, in the clauses then added to the creed. I say, without fear of contradiction, that this silence would of itself be an argument of irresistible weight in proving that universalism was, as an opinion, perfectly tenable in those days.

But this is a very small part of the evidence. If the silence of these councils is significant, so are the following facts still more significant. We have the faith of the Church defined in two documents, of an authority in its kind quite unique and fundamental—the two Creeds* the

*Whatever we may think of the Athanasian Creed—its want of conciliar authority—its comparatively late date—its uncertain origin—its doubtful acceptance in the East—when it speaks of "everlasting," that term can mean no more than the Scriptural *aionios*, which it represents; and as it is clear that everlasting is not the meaning of *aionios*, this Creed is really quite consistent with the larger hope.

Apostles', and that we call the Nicene. Rightly to estimate the weight of the testimony they bear, let us remember that in the second Great Ecumenical Council, where the Nicene Creed received its present shape, S. GREGORY, of Nazianzus (whose opinions are above referred to) presided: while the chief agent in the task of adding to the Nicene Creed the new clauses then adopted; and ending with the significant words, "I believe in the life of the world to come," (in the *life*, be it remembered, and *in nothing more*), was S. GREGORY, of Nyssa; whose words quoted above, shew him to have been an unhesitating advocate of universal salvation. What can be more significant of the belief of the Church in these primitive days? Look at the facts. To a known and outspoken believer in universal salvation is entrusted principally, by the Church in her Great Council, the duty of defining the faith; and that definition runs thus: "I believe in the life of the world to come." *What but the larger hope* could such words, under such circumstances, have conveyed to the Council? And mark the position these words occupy in the Creed (as does the corresponding clause in the *Apostles' Creed). They close, and as it were, sum up the whole. The Creed opens with a statement of belief in the Great Creator; it speaks of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: of the work of salvation: of the Incarnation, &c. But the great procession of the Christian verities ends, in both Creeds, in the expressive assertion of faith in everlasting life. It is as though both Creeds proclaimed—that to this all Christian truth led, in this all Christian hope culminated; in life, and not in death everlasting.

We have now reached a point from which it is well to look back over the ground we have traversed. We have seen the tide of universalism, (so far from being censured), rising,

*On the great significance of the clause—the Descent into Hell—in this Creed I have already spoken.

swelling, and broadening; till in that famous age of the Church's story, the period embracing the fourth and the earlier years of the fifth century, universalism seems to have been the creed of the majority of Christians in East and West alike; perhaps even of a large majority. It had gained a footing in the most famous schools of theology; had leavened the early Latin Fathers —(p. 137)—and in the roll of its teachers (or those, at least, in sympathy with it), were, as we have seen, most of the greatest names of the greatest age of primitive Christianity. A crowd of witnesses, from almost every quarter to which the Gospel had reached, assure us of their belief that CHRIST liberated from Hades every soul, without exception. And we have heard teachings that openly assert, or, by fair inference, involve the larger hope, from both East and West, from Gaul as well as from Alexandria; from Rome; from Milan; from Arabia; from Palestine; from Antioch; from Cappadocia; from Cilicia; from Constantinople; from the distant Euphrates. No sentimentality can account for such teaching, for the very idea of mercy, as we now conceive it, was then practically unknown; no considerations of mere policy, for these pointed the other way. For to hold out the hope of final salvation, even to the unrepentant heathen, might well seem the surest mode of checking the progress of the Gospel.

Further, this universalism was *essentially and first of all*

based on Scripture; on those promises of a 'restitution of all things,' taught 'by all God's holy prophets,' repeated so often by the Psalmists; and echoed clearly and distinctly in the New Testament. Starting from this, as a basis, we have found in patristic teaching a variety of statements pointing to the larger hope; such are, *e.g.*, the assertion that God's threats are *remedies*; nay, that His fire, and His wrath, and vengeance, are modes of *cure* for the sinner. Some Fathers again teach that God's image can never be wholly lost: that it is not just that those formed (as men are) by God himself in His own image should utterly perish. Others maintain that evil is from its nature a transitory thing; that it is not in essence eternal, and cannot be; that as it had a beginning, so it will have an end. Several again teach (in these I cannot doubt, following S. PAUL), that the resurrection being the gift, through CHRIST, of 'life,' 'immortality,' and 'incorruption,' and 'glory,' involves, nay, IS restoration. Others say that as CHRIST, being God, creates, so He restores, everything (*Col.* i. 16-20); that as all things come from Him, so to Him all things return. We also find the argument, that as CHRIST paid the debt of all, so it is only just that *all* should go free. Another argument there is, whose importance seems to me very great. It is the view so many, and such illustrious, Fathers teach, that death is no penalty, but is, indeed, a cure, that it is, in fact, the great Potter remoulding His own handiwork to restore it to its pristine beauty. And, perhaps, even more significant is the assertion, that the sinner's destruction means but the destruction of the sin (the *sinner* perishes, the man lives).

Such teaching would be significant even in a solitary instance; but here we have witness upon witness, to whom Greek was a familiar and a living tongue, repeating the same striking idea; teaching death to be no penalty, but the re-moulding of our nature by the heavenly

artist, and designed to cure sin; teaching, too, that the sinner's destruction by God is not loss but gain, is not annihilation, but conversion and reformation. To this point I shall return, and adduce fresh evidence from early writers, in the next chapter.

To resume, I would be candid. It is not necessary to claim as universalists every name from whom quotations have been made; nor need we at all forget the existence of an opposite school of thought; but we may fairly claim that a great mass of evidence exists in primitive days, in favour of universalism, at once directly and indirectly. But why, I may ask, in fairness, WHY has this evidence been ignored, or denied, or, in the last resort, explained away? And why has everything been made to turn on one solitary feature, to the exclusion of all others—on ambiguous epithets—which, I freely admit, exist in the Fathers; but which patristic usage clearly shews to be wholly inadequate to proving endless misery. I trust the importance of the question will be a sufficient excuse for my again giving some illustrations, at once of the usage of such terms as *aionios* and *perpetuus*, &c., and of the length to which patristic teaching goes in asserting the larger hope. S. JEROME, as we have noticed, not seldom applies *perpetuus* and *eternus* to things merely temporary. Amon, *e.g.*, perpetually desolate, is finally to be converted—(p. 92-3)—so is Edom;

so is Jerusalem; so is Egypt. To S. JEROME the 'outer darkness' permits an escape; and after 'the uttermost farthing' is paid, salvation comes.—*In Micah* viii. The fire that destroyed Jerusalem under Hadrian is 'eternal.'—*In Ez.* xxiv. Nay, JONAH's three days imprisonment in the whale is 'eternal' night!—*In Jon.* ii. And the very fire of 'hell' (Gehenna) cleanses (and is, therefore, temporary).—*In Nahum* iii. THEODORET intimates that 'eternal' death admits an escape.—*In Zach.* ix., and that 'eternal' disgrace may be only temporary.—*In Jer.* xxiii. S. HILARY says Jonah escaped from 'eternal' bars.—*In Ps.* lxviii. And such teaching is common as to the meaning of eternal. 'Eternal' gates are burst open, says the Gospel of NICODEMUS, and 'eternal' prisoners set free.—*Leo. Imp. Hom.* vii. 'Eternal' night illuminated.—CÆSARIUS *of Arles.* The 'eternal' bonds of those in Hades are loosed, says an old author quoted by NICETAS (Serronius).—*Cat. in Job.* xxvi. Patristic usage, again, is well illustrated by no less an authority than S. ATHANASIUS, who calls the sin against the Holy Ghost 'unpardonable,' and its punishment 'eternal'; and yet asserts that this 'unpardonable' and 'eternal' sin might, on repentance, be pardoned.—*See Bingh.* ii. 970. And let us carefully note that this was the *general opinion* of the Antients—a very suggestive fact.

To S. GREGORY of Nyssa, a 'limitless' interval can be crossed over.—*In Ps.* cap. xiv., nay, he

describes even the 'second death' as cleansing.—*De an. et res.* S. BASIL teaches that 'sins unto *death*' admit a cure.—*In Is.* iv.; and that God's wrath, that 'will *not* cease,' ceases on repentance.—*In Is.* i. He teaches also that where it is said, Moab shall be shut out 'eternally' (from God), this 'eternal' is not really more than temporal.—*In Ps.* lix. S. AMBROSE asserts that 'perpetual' bonds may be loosed; and that escape is possible even from the 'eternal' fire prepared for the devil—(p. 93.) The antient author of the second Sibylline Book tells us (in words that recall the statement in *Rev.* xx. 14, about the second death), that 'hell' (Hades) is cast into '*unquenchable fire*' (through which *all* must pass) for CLEANSING. We have noticed an old writer who tells us that the 'undying worm' dies!—(p. 94). S. CHRYSOSTOM teaches that God's vengeance on Sodom ('eternal fire,' S. JUDE) is beneficial; and that He administers death as a medicine for an 'incurable' disease (which may, therefore, certainly be cured). S. CLEMENT asserts the same, as may be seen—(p. 112). The author of *Christus Patiens* begs to be loosed from bonds which 'cannot be loosed.'—*v.* 2540. The author of the sermons already mentioned (in S. AMBROSE'S works), who bids his hearers consider 'the day of judgment' and the 'unquenchable' flames of hell, yet says that Baptism extinguishes the flame of hell, and opens Tartarus.—*Ser.* xxxi. To PAMPHILUS, 'limitless' ages, and to RUFINUS, 'infinite'

ages have an end.—*Apol. pro Orig.* ; as also to S. JEROME.—*In Jon.* iii. EUSEBIUS tells us that 'eternal' (*ex aionos*) gates may be forced open. —*Dem. evan.* iv. 12 ; and that the brief fire which consumes a martyr is 'unquenchable.' DOMITIANUS says those destined to 'eternal' punishment are saved.—FAC. *Pro. def. tr. cap.* Finally, it is certain that even ORIGEN called that punishment 'eternal,' which he taught to be finite, *e.g.*, *Hom.* xvii., *in S. Luc.;* and it is even asserted, by both CÆSARIUS—*Dial* iii., and by LEONTIUS, that ORIGEN and his adherents argued *from the very term aionios, as being finite, that future punishments were temporary.*

On the whole, I think no doubt can reasonably remain on the mind of any fair enquirer, that in the patristic use of such terms as *aionios*, &c., the very greatest laxity prevails; and that such epithets are, at least, totally inconclusive in themselves, being very freely applied to things transient and wholly temporary. But this is not all. Take in the remaining facts presented by so many Fathers, *e.g.*, their undoubted adoption of the doctrine of Reserve,* and the mass of evidence which their

*What this doctrine really was I have shewn (pp. 89-91.) I may add to the abundant proof there given of patristic advocacy of fraud and deceit, for a good end, the following from an eminent scholar: who is speaking of *wholesale Catholic forgeries.* "This vehemently moves me, that I see in the first times of the Church how many there were, who thought it a palmary deed, that heavenly truth should be aided by their own figments. These *falsehoods* they called *dutiful*, excogitated with a good end ; from which fountain, without doubt,

writings present in favour of universalism (evidence only to be accounted for by a conviction of its truth). Take in all the facts, and I feel convinced there remains only one possible hypothesis, on which *all these phenomena become intelligible*, viz., that the real beliefs, or strongest sympathies of these Fathers were clearly on the side of the larger hope.

I have said enough, it may be, amply to prove the wide diffusion of universalism in the early centuries, alike in East and West, taught as it was, as in perfect harmony with the Catholic faith. But it may be well to call two witnesses (whose testimony it seems hopeless to gainsay), as to the widespread belief of the larger hope. S. JEROME (and no more competent witness can exist), writing towards the end of the fourth century, says—"I know that *most persons* understand by the story of Nineveh and its king, the *ultimate forgiveness of the Devil and all rational creatures.*" Now, if *most* believed the ultimate salvation of every evil spirit, ought we not to say that *all*, or nearly all, believed in the more moderate dogma of universal human salvation in S. JEROME's day? But there is another witness of slightly later date, and of equal weight. S. AUGUSTINE tells us that, in his days, there were

sprang *600 books*, which that and the next age saw published, under the name even of the Lord Jesus, and other saints."—CASAUBON, *Exerc.* i., *Baroni App. in Ann.* As to the wide diffusion of this view of dissimulation (as perfectly lawful), there is a curious proof in S. JEROME'S letters. In his *ep.* lxxxix, he challenges AUGUSTINE to find even *one* advocate of his view that S. PAUL and S. PETER were not dissembling.—(*Gal.* ii.)

not only some, but "very many" or "the *majority*"—*quam plurimi*," who compassionated the eternal punishment of the damned, and believed that it would not take place."—*Enchir.*, *112*. The significance of such testimonies is very great indeed. They place on record the all important fact, that universalism was the belief of half, *or more than half*, the Latin Church in the fifth century; and if so, it would be more widely held in the East, where the influence of the great Greek Fathers was more felt.

In the succeeding ages as ignorance spread, and superstitions of every kind multiplied, with a wholly corrupt and licentious people, and a clergy venal and grossly ignorant, there is no reason to wonder that, by slow degrees, the earlier and nobler faith decayed (declining in almost exact proportion as knowledge declined and corruptions flourished); a process aided largely in the West by the preponderance of the cruel Augustinian theology, and by the consequent development of the doctrine of Purgatory. It would be difficult, and want of space forbids the attempt, to convey to general readers, an adequate idea of the degraded state of learning and morals, when, in the tenth century, the climax of darkness was reached in the West. Yet the creed even then current was mercy itself compared with our modern traditions, leaving as it did a door of mercy widely open, beyond the grave, to all but a few exceptionally great sinners.

A very interesting fact deserves notice here, as shewing how the conscience, even while outwardly submitting to the traditional creed, still seeks indirectly to evade its horrible strain and pressure.

This relief was sought in three ways, to which I can only briefly refer. (I). By teaching a mild view of the punishment of hell, *e.g.*, some have pictured the lost as joining in praise to God. (II). Some, again, have taught that the pains of hell are at certain seasons (*e.g.*, Easter) mitigated ; or that these pains, though never wholly removed, might be continuously diminished. (III). More significant still is the opinion of a possible, and even an actual deliverance from hell : for which there is no little authority. S. JOHN DAMASCENE tells how THEKLA delivered her mother FALCONILLA. TRAJAN was widely believed in the middle ages to have been delivered from hell. SUAREZ says the possibility of this deliverance is an open question.—*De pec.* vii. 3. ESTIUS even says *many* had been so delivered.—*Disp.* xlvi. 241., these deliverances, it is true, refer to a period antecedent to the Day of Judgment. But I allude to the subject as illustrating one phase of the revolt of the human mind and conscience, from a dogma too shocking to believe.

Those who have followed the account of early opinion given above, will understand at once why in the period, into which we now proceed to enquire, our quotations are neither so numerous nor so striking as before. This period extends from about the middle of the fifth century to the eleventh or twelfth.—See p. 87. I may begin by a quotation from FACUNDUS, 540 A.D., a man of considerable eminence, Bishop of Hermiane. " To all this is to be added the confession of DOMITIAN of Galatia, formerly

Bishop of Ancyra ; for in the book which he wrote to VIGILIUS . . he says, 'they have hastily run out to anathematize most holy and glorious teachers, on account of those doctrines which have been advanced concerning pre-existence and restitution ; and this, indeed, under pretext of ORIGEN, but thereby anathematizing *all those Saints, who were before and have been after him.*'" —*Pro. def. trium cap.* iv. 4. It is clear from FACUNDUS' words, in the context, that DOMITIAN believed in the salvation of all evil spirits—a noteworthy fact—indeed, we shall see this belief existing at a still later period.

There are also three branches of evidence to which I desire here briefly to refer. First, we know on excellent authority that many of the followers of NESTORIUS,* who were very widely diffused over the East, taught universalism.—See ASSEMANNI—*Bibliotheque Orientale.* Nor has their Nestorianism *the very least connection* with this particular opinion, which they drew, not from NESTORIUS, but from the general current of Church teaching in that age, and to which they thus become witnesses. "It is obvious," says the Dean of Wells, "that the special point on

*(1.) Able critics, perfectly orthodox, have seen excellent reason to believe that the differences between NESTORIUS and his opponents, were mainly verbal only, and capable of adjustment, but aggravated by the intrigues of the unscrupulous CYRIL. (II.) Certain it is that, practically, the Anglican Church has abandoned the term (theotokos), so strenuously contended for. (III.) And it is also certain that the condemnation of NESTORIUS helped to pave the way for the cult of the Blessed Virgin.

which NESTORIUS was condemned had no connexion with this or that form of eschatology; and that it was derived by them from those whose orthodoxy, like GREGORY of Nyssa, was unquestioned."—*Spirits in prison. (b.)* But next, it is also certain that in the sixth century, in the monasteries, erected in the wilds lying between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea, there was a strong party, of which DOMITIAN (just quoted) was a leader, teaching (with other tenets of ORIGEN) the restitution of all souls. *(c).* Further, several testimonies might be quoted from writers of the period now under discussion, teaching the liberation from Hades, by CHRIST, of every soul whatsoever.

GENNADIUS, Patriarch of Constantinople, 458 A.D., may be quoted. He is not a very consistent writer, but the statements made are interesting.

"The whole body will follow the first fruits, and the rest of the body shall be given to the head. . . For, said He, when lifted up, I will draw all men unto Myself." —*ib.*, ch. vi. GENNADIUS also seems to hold the opinion shared by many Fathers—See next chapter—which regards the resurrection, as in itself involving immunity from sin and suffering. "Thank God who has given us immortality, incorruptibility, and impassibility." —*ib.* vii. 24. Finally, as I understand his comments on *Rom.* viii. 19, there will be one day a universal regeneration, in which all are to share.

Side by side with these extracts may be set a passage taken from ANDREW, Bishop of Cæsarea (500 A.D.)

He is describing the great (future) Apocalyptic song of praise, thus: "By *all things* intelligible or sensible (*i.e.*, visible or invisible), both living and simply existing, God *is glorified* as author of all, in the modes of speech natural (to them)."—*In Rev.* v. 13. Neither GENNADIUS nor ANDREW are consistent writers; and they may not design to teach universalism, but such extracts seem to me noteworthy; and I should feel quite unable to reconcile them with the dogma of endless misery and sin.

About the year 500 A.D., were probably published the (so-called) works of DIONYSIUS, the Areopagite.

The influence exerted by these writings, and their profoundly mystical tone, was extremely great. As the worship of the Church became more and more material, so contemplative minds gladly turned for relief to a theology which spiritualised, without rejecting, the external symbols. The system these writings embrace recalls the earlier teaching of Alexandria, and its Platonism; and asserting, as they do, that all things come from God, and return to Him cleansed from all stain, they form a storehouse of universalism. Although challenged when first produced in 533 A.D., at Constantinople, yet, in an uncritical age, a belief in their authenticity prevailed. Thus viewed as belonging to the Apostolic era, their influence was widely felt, especially in the case of two remarkable men. Of these, one was MAXIMUS, head of a monastery near Constantinople, 645 A.D., the ablest theologian of his day. The other was J. S. ERIGENA—perhaps the acutest of the Schoolmen—who, two centuries later, taught at the Court of Charles The Bald. Thus, both East and West, shared in the impulse originating in this mystic theology.

I append the following brief extracts to shew the tone of the writings of the so-called DIONYSIUS. "All things—whatsoever exist and

are formed—exist and are formed for the sake of beauty and goodness ; . . for of Him and through Him, and unto Him are all things."—*Rom.* x. 36. . "He holds together and converts all things (to Himself)."—*De div. nom.* iv. 10. "With God are the causes of evils, they are beneficent powers."—*ib.* 30. "Even of all evils, the beginning and end is the good, because for the sake of good exist all things, both those which are good and those which are opposed to it."—*ib.* 30. "What is good is the beginning and end of all things, . . making the privation (of good, *i.e.*, evil) good."—*ib.* 35. "Even to the *demons* that they exist both comes of good and *is good.*'—*ib.* 34. "Towards the supreme love tends the total love flowing from *all* existences—growing as it were together with every existence."—*ib.* 16. "There is one simple force, self moved, towards a blending together in unity (flowing) from what is good unto the last of those things that exist."—*ib.* 17. God "converts and holds together all things, as being the all powerful abode of all, safe guarding all things, . . nor permitting them to fall away and perish by departing from the all perfect home."—*ib.* x. 1. "The good (or beautiful) is the beginning and end of all things."—*ib.* iv. 7.

I now quote briefly from MAXIMUS, 645 A.D., to whom I have above alluded. Having spoken somewhat unfavourably of GREGORY of Nyssa's teaching, he proceeds : "For it is necessary

that as *all* nature is to receive at the resurrection immortality of the flesh, . . so, too, the fallen powers of the soul must, in the process of the ages, *cast off the memories of sin* implanted in them ; and having passed all the ages, . . *come to God* ; and so by the knowledge, not the fruition of good, receive strength and *be restored to their original state.*"—*Quæs. et dub.* xiii. Again, in his *Aphorisms, sec.* xx., 'the reunion of all rational essences with God is established as the final end.' So in his *Scholia* on* DIONYSIUS, we find him teaching that "God is end and measure of all things."—*In De div. nom.* iv. "God moves, for He transforms and changes for the better all things, as says DIONYSIUS, 'He is beginning and end of all things.' "—*ib.* v. And again, "God is made All in All, embracing all things."—*Ambig.* ii. (from ERIGENA'S version). "All things made by God are gathered unto God perpetually and unchangeably."—*ib.* "The rest of God is the full bringing back to Him of the things that are created."†—*Cap. theol.* i. 47. Again, with so many Fathers, MAXIMUS teaches that the passing away of the wicked, is the passing away of their wickedness. Thus on *Ps.* xxxvii. 35, he says the meaning is that evil will pass away and leave no trace.—*Schol. De div. nom.* iv. MAXIMUS, as noticed above, connects

*A solitary critic ascribes these to another author.

†I do not deny that MAXIMUS uses elsewhere the language of the ordinary creed, but that admits of easy explanation ; and any such view is *certainly opposed to the whole system* which he teaches, and which seems to involves the restoration of *the entire creation.*

with the resurrection the idea of restoration. I take one more passage: "At the resurrection, through the grace of the Incarnate Son, the flesh will be absorbed by the soul."—*Quoted by* ERIG. —*De div.* v. 8.

Our next witness shall be ERIGENA, of whom I have spoken. "It belongs in common to all things that have been made to return—as though by a perishing—into those causes which subsist in God."—*De div. nat.* v. 21. In another very characteristic passage (to which I have unfortunately mislaid the reference), he argues that as CHRIST is maker and cause of all things, so "the universal end of the whole* creation is the Word of God. . Last of all, the universal creation shall be united with the Creator, and shall be one in Him and with Him. *And this is the end of all things visible and invisible.*" There is to be a return and a gathering together "into that unity of all things† which is in God and is God: so that both all things may be God and God be all things."—*Pref. in Max. Ambig.* "The whole human race has been both redeemed in CHRIST, and will return into the heavenly

*ERIGENA guards against Pantheism, by repudiating any blending in the future life of the human and divine.—*De div. nat.* v. 8.

†It is true that ERIGENA, writing in the Latin Church of the ninth century, naturally *professes* a belief in endless punishment. But this stands in hopeless contradiction to his entire theological system; and the extraordinary process, of jugglery with words, by which he attempts to teach that a thing can exist and not exist at the same time, may be read in the fifth book.—*De div. nat.* A curious and striking passage intimates that perhaps the ETERNAL PUNISHMENT of the devils will be *the universal abolition of their wickedness and impiety.—ib.* v. 27.

Jerusalem."—*De div. nat.* v. 38. "Nothing contrary to the divine goodness, and life, and blessedness can be co-eternal with it. Because the divine goodness will destroy evil, eternal life will absorb death, blessedness absorb sin."—*ib.* 27. "Sins and iniquities . . shall be completely brought to nothingness, so that they shall have no existence."—*De div. nat.* iv., "Further, if the entire world, and *the entire creation* UNIVERSALLY, which has been made by God, is not destined to return into the eternal causes in which it subsists, then the whole of our reasoning so far, will fall away, as vain, and completely gone to pieces."—*ib.* 28. "For it seemed not (good) to divine justice that aught should perish of that which it had made."—*ib.* v.

There are still writers who (even at dates later than the present) teach the liberation from Hades of all souls, but any direct evidence for universalism* is now very rare. The following from ŒCUMENIUS, 990 A.D., shews evident traces of primitive teaching. He writes on the famous words: 'That God may be All in All,' "The abolition of evil is shewn by these words, for when sin (*he hamartia*—all sin) has been taken away, it is evident that God will be All in All, when we are no longer divided between God and passions. Others have so interpreted it, that *all things* will

*Even if we believe that ŒCUMENIUS did not share this opinion, yet the evidence of primitive universalism, furnished in this quotation, is significant.

be brought back to the Father as source."—*In 1 Cor.* xv.

THEOPHYLACT, Archbishop of Acridia, in Bulgaria, 1077 A.D., shall be our next witness. By the parable of the ninety-nine and the one lost sheep, he understands the just and sinners. Some, he goes on to say, understand by the 100 sheep all rational creatures, and by the one lost sheep man (*i.e.*, mankind), . . and by the lost coin, the lost image of God. "The whole world is cleansed over again from sin, and plainly the lost coin (the royal image) is found." But as the lost sheep of the parable is found, then if this represent mankind, the passage seems to involve universalism. On *1 Cor.* xv. 28, he says: "Some understand by this the *removal* of *wickedness*, for when sin is no more, plainly God will be All in All." On *Eph.* i. 10: "Things in heaven were cut off from things on earth, and had not one head. For though by creation all had one God, yet by friendship *(oikeiosis domesticity)* they had not yet (one God): and so it was that the Father planned to bring back to one head the things in heaven and on earth, *i.e.*, to set CHRIST as head over all." On *Col.* i. 18, he says: "Paul by the *Church* intends the whole human race." CHRIST, as first fruits, has even (all) the rest following him (*kai tous loipous*). "One sheaf being offered, the whole harvest is sanctified, . . and one body rising, the whole nature (mankind) is deemed worthy of the

resurrection." "CHRIST is first begotten (from the dead) as first fruits of the resurrection, because that is regeneration." I shall not decide on this Father's private views; but I am unable to reconcile the train of thought in these passages with the perpetuity of evil. Nor are later instances wanting. "Both ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, and DURANDUS shew us that, even in their day, absolute universalism was not unknown. It was the opinion of the school of GILBERT of Poictiers —ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, *Sent.* iv. 45—and 'aliquorum juristarum'—DURANDUS,"— *Mercy and Judgment.* Again, a great name, St. ANSELM, in the twelfth century, writes thus: "It is quite foreign to God's nature to suffer any reasonable creature wholly to perish."—*Cur Deus Homo*, ii. 4 (a striking proof of the survival of the earlier hope) "nor," adds the saint, "is it *possible* for the reasonable mind to think otherwise." To these testimonies may be added a highly interesting prayer, quoted by the Dean of Wells from an old English manual, *The Fifteen O's*, published by CAXTON; and illustrating the dominant tone of religious feeling in England, in the age immediately preceding the Reformation:—"Be merciful to those souls for whom there is no hope . . in their torment, save that they were made in thine image. . . Put forth thy right hand and *free them from the interminable pains and anguish of hell*, and lead them to the fellowship of the citizens on high."

The three periods of the Church's history, embraced in the enquiry we have just made, may be said to correspond to early spring time ; to summer brief and bright ; to autumn followed by wintry gloom. After some centuries of conflict and growth, the freedom won for the Gospel by CONSTANTINE was followed by an outburst of activity, theological and intellectual (such were the Church's spring and summertide). But in the very success lay unperceived the seeds of disaster. Elements of evil, repressed in adversity, soon revived ; and the crowds who now flocked to Christian teaching brought with them, too often, the superstition, the ignorance, the vices of heathenism. Bitter intestine strife, scandalous intrigues, virulent controversies, began more than ever to exhaust the energies of the Church, or to direct them into barren channels. And so the autumn and its decay followed. To the Fathers succeeded the Schoolmen in the West ; while, in the East, a swarm of writers arose, ever weaving those subtle speculations so dear to the Eastern mind. Other features of this period I can barely notice, *e.g.*, the break up of the Roman empire ; the growth of the Papacy; the successive inroads of barbarians into Italy ; the spread of Monasticism ; the ever widening divisions between the East and West ; and, lastly, the rise of Mohametanism. Who can pretend to wonder that amid all this 'hurly burly,' the larger hope,—taught so freely in the Church's spring and summer time,—gained ever fewer

adherents in its autumnal decay, and well nigh died out in its dark winter ?

But any sketch of universalism would be incomplete without a discussion of the assertion still repeated, though often refuted, that the dogma of the final salvation of all men was condemned, in the person of ORIGEN, at the Fifth Council. This assertion is, as will be distinctly shewn, untrue. An attempt was indeed made to procure a condemnation of this doctrine—an attempt which *wholly failed;* and which was made, not at the Fifth Council, but at the Home Synod of Constantinople (*i.e.*, a committee of Bishops from a small number of sees near Constantinople, who, with some officers of the Metropolitan Church, formed a standing council for the Patriarch). For a clearer understanding of the facts, which are at once important, and very generally misunderstood, it must be premised, that the larger hope was but a very inconsiderable part of what was known as "Origenism," and quite independent of it. Origenism meant a widely spreading system, embracing many fanciful and crude speculations on the Trinity ; on preexistence of souls ; on cycles of probation ; on personality ; on the resurrection body ; on the insecure bliss of the saved. These speculations it was that led ORIGEN into disrepute ; and *not his belief in the final salvation of all men.* The proofs of this are abundant and decisive. (I.) Those who taught simple universalism even more

decidedly than ORIGEN, *e.g.*, CLEMENT, of Alexandria, and GREGORY, of Nyssa, and many others, were held in universal honour. (II.) The larger hope was, in fact, widely held by those who opposed ORIGEN in everything else (*e.g.*, the school of Antioch). (III.) We have several lists of the alleged errors of ORIGEN, from 300 down to 404 A.D., *in none of them is any mention of the larger hope.* I may instance the list of METHODIUS, 300 A.D., that given by PAMPHILUS and EUSEBIUS, in their Apology, 310 A.D. ; that of EUSTATHIUS, 380 A.D. ; of EPIPHANIUS, 376 and 394 A.D. ; of THEOPHILUS, about 400 A.D. ; and more than one of S. JEROME. These facts are very striking, because they are the testimony of ORIGEN'S adversaries. I pause here to ask how these facts can be reconciled with the common prejudice, which asserts that ORIGEN'S teaching of all men's final salvation, was that which brought him into disrepute ? Indeed, so far from the larger hope, as we understand it, being something peculiar to ORIGEN, there is strong reason to believe that—while he certainly taught restoration and the limited duration of all future punishment (and thus give a great impulse to these opinions)—he himself held them in a very peculiar form. I do not mean so much that he taught the final salvation of all evil spirits—a view apparently held by several Fathers—but that he seems to have taught (I.) that all human beings would return to exactly the *same level*, so that a prostitute, as S. JEROME says, would finally be the same as

the Blessed Virgin ; (II.) that, thereafter, fresh cycles would ensue, in which even the good angels might fall away, and so on for ever. These views naturally invited opposition on all sides, from the friends of the larger hope as well as from its enemies.

Thus, from what has been stated, it is absolutely certain that to condemn "ORIGEN" or "ORIGENISM" in general terms, does not involve disapproval of restoration, even as he taught it; still less of the restoration of all human beings; (a tenet quite compatible with very strong hostility to Origenism). I repeat that all the evidence goes to prove that it was rash speculations tending towards Arianism; and towards a denial as it was thought of the resurrection, and many other notions equally crude (but unconnected with simple restoration), that brought this great teacher into disrepute.

Equally misunderstood are the facts connected with the alleged condemnation of ORIGEN at the Fifth Council, so that it is needful to state briefly the salient points, which are these :—In 541 the EMPEROR JUSTINIAN caused the Patriarch MENNAS to convene at Constantinople the *Home Synod*, expressly to condemn the larger hope, and certain other opinions attributed to ORIGEN. This is noteworthy, as being the first attempt to procure a distinct condemnation of the larger hope. Mark the result. "This Synod passed

fifteen Canons, in which various theories of ORIGEN were condemned, but *deliberately omitted*" that concerning the larger hope, *i.e.*, *deliberately* refused to condemn it.* Twelve years later was convened the Fifth Council (born in intrigue and unrecognised by the English Church). It is said, but the fact is disputed by many able and impartial writers, to have condemned ORIGEN by name in the eleventh canon, but only in general terms, which, as I have shewn above, proves *nothing at all* as to the condemnation of the larger hope. Further, special reasons exist which render any intention to condemn universalism on the part of the Fifth Council in the highest degree unlikely. (I.) The promoters were themselves Origenists. (II.) The object of the Council was to condemn certain Nestorian tenets, quite *distinct from universalism.* (III.) The Council expressly referred to S. GREGORY of Nyssa, as a prop of the faith, who was the most outspoken universalist of all the Fathers! Such is the true story of the so-called condemnation of universalism. The Home Synod distinctly refused to condemn it, even at the Emperor's bidding; while if, as is doubtful,† the

*I have once or twice (pp. 91, 107, 134) glanced at the mode in which the advocates of endless evil attempt to meet the evidence for early universalism. Such a line of advocacy is not merely unworthy; but indicates a prejudice (honest it may be, but) impervious to ordinary evidence. Ample additional instances of what I mean will be found in Mr. OXENHAM'S admirable discussion of the historical questions raised as to ORIGEN—*What is the truth as to everlasting punishment?*—Part II.

†I have not space to state the reasons for these doubts.

Fifth Council did condemn ORIGEN, it did not thereby condemn the larger hope ; nor am I aware that this special point was *ever so much as submitted to any ancient general council for decision.* In short, "we have no evidence that the belief in 'restitution,' which prevailed in the fourth and fifth centuries, was EVER definitely condemned BY ANY COUNCIL OF THE CHURCH." —*Spirits in prison.* A fact which I must ask my readers to impress most clearly on their minds.

No doubt some will ask: Does not the very fact that this belief in an endless hell was permitted to spread so widely prove its truth ?

If so, I reply, why not then carry out your theory ? Is transubstantiation true because it has prevailed so widely ? Papal infallibility is a belief very widely spread ; is it, therefore, to be accepted ? The cultus of the Blessed Virgin is very wide spread; is it, therefore, Scriptural ? Instances without end might be added. In fact, no more groundless belief can be pointed out than this, that the prevalence of an opinion is a proof of its truth. Are they who hold this strange opinion prepared to join the Church of Rome, and accept the supremacy of the Pope, because this belief is that of the vast majority of Christians in the Western Church ? It has pleased God to permit in numberless cases error to prevail, and obscure in this present age His truth. This very fact is but a louder call to us to work against all that hides or distorts that truth. Nay, it points not uncertainly to a conclusion in perfect agreement with the larger hope ; this namely, that the present is but an initial stage of being ; one of many ages, during which God is slowly, very slowly, working out a vast plan, and permits for a moment, as it were, an apparent triumph to error and to evil.

Let us now pass on and see what our own Church teaches on this point. We shall I think find, if we examine it carefully, in our Book of Common Prayer—moulded as it is on primitive lines—not a few testimonies in favour of the larger hope.

Go, for instance, into any of our Churches at the service of Holy Baptism—what is the profession of faith required, how does it end? "Dost thou believe in everlasting life after death," and not a *word or hint further.* Again, in our Litany do we not pray God to have mercy, not on some men, but on *all men?* Do we not also address, in the same Litany, JESUS CHRIST as the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world," and that twice over? Do we not in Holy Communion repeat, *three* times in one prayer, this truly Catholic address to CHRIST, as "taking away the sins of the world?" And here it is right to ask, are words a mere pretence, and that in our holiest moments? How does CHRIST *take away* the sins of the world, if to all eternity in hell the sins of any men remain not taken away? On this point our Book of Common Prayer is specially emphatic, for in the proper preface for Easter-day we are bidden to remember how CHRIST "*hath taken away* the sins of the world; and has by His death *destroyed* death." But to abolish death in its Scriptural meaning is surely to abolish all that the Fall brought on man. Take next another instance: in one of her Ember-day collects, the Church bids us thus pray: "To those who shall be ordained, grant Thy grace that they may set forward the salvation of all men." Does the salvation of *all* men mean the damnation of *most men;* of *any* man? Again, we pray "for all sorts and conditions of men; that God's saving health may reach all nations." And so, too, when the Church bids us render thanks for a world redeemed, and for our creation, no less than for our redemption, how can this be if creation be not a certain promise of good? If creation does, as a matter of fact,

imply an awful unutterable risk of hell's torment, why bid a man give thanks for that which may be to him an occasion of endless pains? I will next ask your attention to a fact perhaps not always remembered, that our Church deliberately expunged that article of hers which (adopted in 1552) condemned the belief in the final salvation of all men. "The 42nd article was withdrawn" (says the Bishop of Manchester), "because the Church, knowing that men like ORIGEN, CLEMENT, and GREGORY of Nyssa, were universalists, refused to dogmatise on such questions." Nor are other indications wanting of the hopeful teaching of our Prayer Book. Let us not fail to note the hope expressed for *all* in the Burial Service; the stress laid on the wide extent of the Atonement in the Catechism, and in the General Confession; the true force of all this is best seen when our formularies are compared with those of other reformed communions (a comparison for which I have not space). In a word, the tone of the Book of Common Prayer is frequently that indicated in the Collect for the Sunday before Easter —where the object of CHRIST'S death is described as this —"That *all mankind* should follow the example of His great humility," and in that other prayer, which addresses God as one, "whose property is *always* to have mercy;" words which, if taken in their full meaning, certainly seem to teach the larger hope.

But there is further important evidence of our Church's teaching. Of CHRIST'S descent into Hades I have already spoken, and pointed out that to teach the liberation of *all* souls thence, is to teach universalism.

And this liberation of *all*, it can, I think, be shewn that our Church teaches: For the Church has intimated her belief in the fact of CHRIST'S descent into Hades, and preaching there, by the selection of *St. Peter* iii. 16, as the Epistle for Easter Eve, and of *Zech.* ix., as the first lesson (see v. 11, and its striking allusion to the

"prisoners of hope.") Further, in the Homily *(of the Resurrection)* appointed for Easter Day, we have the result of CHRIST's preaching in Hades stated in the following words:—"He destroyed the Devil and *all* his tyranny, and took from him *all his captives*, and hath raised and set them *with Himself among the heavenly citizens* above. His death *destroyed Hell and all the damnation thereof.*" These words are, as I think, clear, and teach the liberation of *all* souls, without exception, from Hades: a point plainly equivalent to asserting universalism—(See pp. 106-7). Lastly, let me call attention to a serious point arising out of the Atonement. *Art.* xxxi. says: "The offering of CHRIST is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world." But if *all the sins of the whole world have been perfectly atoned for*, how can any of these sins be eternally punished? CHRIST either did satisfy all claims by His death or He did not. If He did, what becomes of the popular creed? How can sins already atoned for, and taken away, be justly visited with endless retribution? If He did not, what becomes of the Atonement?

Nor has the larger hope wanted able defenders in English theology since the days of the Prayer Book. It is interesting to note, that amid the tumults of the Rebellion and the gross profligacy of the Restoration, there rose and flourished a school of devout men (trained, most of them, at Cambridge); partly Anglican, partly Nonconformists, who held, or sympathised with, the larger hope.

One of the earliest was GERALD WINSTANLEY, who taught a complete restoration of the whole creation in the *Mystery of God*, printed 1669. To nearly the same epoch belong two very remarkable names, RALPH CUDWORTH and HENRY MORE, whose sympathies were distinctly in favour of the larger hope. More out-spoken in his teaching was PETER STERRY, Fellow of Emmanuel

College, Cambridge—one of CROMWELL's chaplains—whose works published (after his death) in 1683 and 1710, evidence marked ability, and are now of great rarity and value. I may note next, as of the same school of thought, SADLER, author of *Olbia*, and WHICHCOTE, a friend of CUDWORTH, and MORE, a Fellow of Emmanuel College, a contemporary of MILTON and JEREMY TAYLOR; and two less known authors, R. COPPIN, 1655, and W. ERBURY. At this time there also appeared not a few anonymous books, advocating the wider hope, which deserve mention, as illustrating the course of theological enquiry in the seventeenth century, *e.g.*, *Enochian Walks with God*, and *The Revelation of the Everlasting Gospel Message*, by the same author; and *God's Light*, 1653; also *Of the Torments of Hell, the Foundation Shaken*, 1658, by S. RICHARDSON. A more distinguished advocate of the larger hope was Bishop RUST, successor of JEREMY TAYLOR, author of *De Veritate*, and *A Letter concerning the Opinions of Origen*. Another name almost equally eminent is that of JEREMY WHITE, Fellow of Trinity, Cambridge, chaplain to CROMWELL, and author of *The Restoration of all Things*, published (after his death) in 1712; a book, I may add, eloquent, devout, and breathing the deepest reverence for Holy Scripture. Towards the close of the seventeenth century, came R. STAFFORD, and JANE LEADE, the latter a mystic, whose works are rare and valuable. To these I may add TILLOTSON, who seems to have held that God was not bound to execute his threatenings pronounced against sinners; a view in which he was followed more decisively by Bishop STILLINGFLEET; and by Dr. BURNET, Master of the Charter House, a pupil of his at Cambridge, who, in his *De Statu Mortuorum*, teaches universalism openly. The movement in favour of the larger hope was continued during the eighteenth century by WILLIAM WHISTON, in his *Sermons and Essays*, London, 1707, and by many others. I may name Dr. CHEYNE, in his *Discourses*, published 1742, and (probably) Bishop WARBURTON.—(See ch. viii. note on *Rev.* xx. iv.), Bishop NEWTON, 1750, in a sermon on the *Final state of man*; and WILLIAM LAW,

1766, in his *Letters* and *Way to Divine Knowledge*. To the latter may probably be due, ultimately, the whole revival movement in England. To this era belong also two books, little known, *De Vita Functorum Statu*, by J. WINDET, and *Glad Tidings to Jews and Gentiles*, by R. CLARKE, both published in 1763, and both advocating the larger hope. Other names of authors, favourable to universalism, in this century are—J. COOKE, London, 1752; J. RELLY, 1759; Sir G. STONEHOUSE, 1768; W. DUDGEON, 1765; Rev. C. BERROW, 1772; C. CHARNAY, 1784; F. LEICESTER, 1786; J. WEAVER, 1792; J. BROWNE, 1798. About this time ELHANAN WINCHESTER, a follower of JOHN WESLEY, advocated the larger hope in his *Dialogues;* and, indeed, WESLEY himself seems to have finally shared this view, for he published, in 1787, as "one of the *most sensible tracts* he had ever read," a translation from BONNET's *Palingenesie Philosophique*, which seems to advocate universalism, *e.g.*, it teaches: "There will be a perpetual advance of *all the individuals of humanity* towards perfection" (in the other life).

In the present century the same steady movement continues, with ever increasing force, in the direction of the larger hope. The name of ERSKINE, of Linlathen, will be familiar to many. Again, the late Bishop WILBERFORCE is stated on high authority to have finally "leaned to the larger hope," which his son now preaches. Other well known names may be given as openly teaching, or sympathising with universalism, *e.g.*, TENNYSON, WHITTIER, BROWNING, WHITMAN, EDNA LYALL, GEORGE MACDONALD, O. W. HOLMES, Mrs. OLIPHANT, JAMES HINTON, C. BRONTE and her sister EMILY, Gen. GORDON, &c. In theology not a few names may be added, as adopting or in sympathy with the larger hope, *e.g.*, the late

Bishop of ARGYLL, Canon KINGSLEY, F. D. MAURICE, J. FOSTER, Dr. COX, BALDWIN BROWN, Canon WESTCOTT, Dr. LITTLEDALE, the Bishop of MANCHESTER, F. W. ROBERTSON, Rev. Sir G. W. COX, A. JUKES, ARCHER GURNEY. I do not represent this list as at all exhaustive, yet it is enough to prove that this movement is deep-seated, long continued, and extending itself widely amongst men of the most varied schools of thought. Besides this we must not forget the very numerous cases, in which the traditional creed has been wholly abandoned, for the "conditional immortality" theory.

And so I close this sketch of early universalism, under a deep sense of my personal deficiencies, increased as they are, at once, by the difficulties of limited space (*e.g.*, S. GREGORY of Nyssa alone would furnish extracts enough to fill these chapters); and by the no less real difficulty of inducing my readers to view this evidence from the standpoint of the early centuries. Let us take the facts as they then were, let us try to picture a state of society in which the sentiment of mercy was practically unknown; in which all things reeked with vices, too loathsome even to name; add the fear of cruel persecution, often threatening; then, under such circumstances, to promise these blood-stained persecutors, these votaries of lust (even though unrepentant in life), a final salvation in the ages to come, must have seemed almost treason to the cause of CHRIST,

because only too likely to arrest conversions. And when to this we add the undoubted fact, that the moral principles then current within the Church, explicitly sanctioned dissimulation—thus rendering lawful that concealment (or denial) of universalism which must have seemed so expedient ; then it is that we gain some idea of the depth of conviction needed to account for even indirect teaching of the larger hope in the early centuries. And, if so, how much more for a universalism often, as we have seen, wide enough to assert or imply, the final salvation of every fallen spirit ?

CHAPTER VI.

UNIVERSALISM AND CREATION.

Ya aller, aaller menschen seelen,
Will Ich; mein Heiland, JESUS CHRIST.
Aufs neue Deiner huld empfehlen,
Weil Du doch ALLER Heiland bist.
—LAVATER.

It will be, perhaps, convenient to take next the argument that may be drawn in favour of universalism from Creation, Incarnation and kindred doctrines: the more so, as I hope to quote patristic testimony which will fitly follow our last chapter. Certain it is that, if we would rightly view the Divine plan in relation to man, we must ascend to the source; must trace the whole up to Creation, to that free creating Love which is God. What, then, is Creation? To Create is for the Creator to assume duties, to be Created is to be invested with rights; rights that become the most tender, and yet the most inexorable, where the creature is formed in God's own image. Such a link between man and God is Creation, organic, imperishable. We are told God is not the Father of all men; *He is only their Creator!* What a total misapprehension these words imply of all that is involved in creating man in the likeness of God. Viewed thus, Creation contains the Gospel in germ; it involves universal Fatherhood, as the greater involves the

less. It is Fatherhood extended, it is paternity and something more, for paternity is for us largely blind and instinctive; but Creation is Love acting freely, divinely; knowing all the consequences, assuming all the responsibility. It seems, then, very strange to seek to escape the consequences of the lesser obligation, by admitting one still greater; to seek, in a word, to evade the results of a divine universal Fatherhood, by pleading that God is only the Creator of all. Hence a good Creator, freely creating for a doom of endless sin, freely introducing a dualism, is a profound moral contradiction. Thus, in the awful light of Creation, the traditional creed shrinks and shrivels up—"Seeing then that the spirit comes from God," says S. JEROME, "it is NOT JUST that they should perish eternally who are sustained by His breath and spirit."—*In Is.* lvii. 6.

I pass to consider the Incarnation. It is the great fact of Christianity. From it flow, and on it depend the Atonement, the Sacramental system, the Resurrection; they are, as it were, results of the Incarnation, and extensions of it. Now one point is by all quite clearly admitted, that JESUS CHRIST became Incarnate as the second Adam. Therefore, to justify such a title, the Incarnation involves the idea of the unity, absolute and organic, of the race of man. "For what purpose is the history of our race traced to its earliest origin, . . unless its fortunes were regarded *as a whole*, and *it must*

stand or fall together."*—*Wilberforce on the Incarnation.* "To that old Creation is opposed the regeneration of man's race, through its new Creation in the second Adam."—*Ib.* "CHRIST, the second Adam, represents, not the individual, but the human race."—*Lightfoot, on Phil.* ii. 7. But this involves the salvation of the race, "which stands or falls together." It is, to borrow a homely phrase, *all or none.* If this were to be stated in the language of science, it would stand thus—Adam=x, where x represents all humanity. And so CHRIST sums up all humanity in the spiritual equation. The traditional creed, in fact, constructs an Incarnation of its own, not that of Scripture. Its Incarnate Son may be the Son of God, but not the Son of man (of humanity), not the second Adam. And as the CHRIST of the traditional creed is not the CHRIST of Scripture, so its human race is not the true humanity, for it teaches that the race is a collection of atoms, separable, inorganic. But Scripture affirms the reverse : it is quite true that every man bears his own burden of sin and suffering ; but there is a truth higher still—the solidarity of the race in the Divine idea and plan. This is the truth, without which the Fall and the Incarnation are unintelligible. In the highest sense CHRIST does not deal with the units of humanity, for humanity itself is the Divine unit

*These statements from the pen of one who teaches that a part of the human race is severed for ever from the Second Adam, are remarkable. They illustrate what has been said (p. 73-4) of the virtual untruth which runs through our traditional theology.

in redemption. Therefore I feel constrained to charge the traditional creed with making void the Atonement. The Atonement it teaches is not the Atonement of the Second Adam for all humanity. Not alone, then, does CHRIST, sooner or later draw to Himself all men, but *He cannot draw less than all men* if He be a new and better Adam. Therefore, I repeat, the traditional creed, while in words teaching, *in fact* denies the Atonement of the Bible. It asserts a universal salvation—but it is a salvation that does not save universally—one in which CHRIST tries to save all, and is defeated. What is this but to dishonour the Cross; in its very essence, to deny that our Lord is truly the Second Adam, and to treat him as one who, in the face of assembled Creation, in the sight of men and angels, has challenged the powers of evil and has failed.

Let us pass to the Sacraments. They are an extension of the Incarnation. "The influence of the Incarnation extends itself through that Sacramental system, which binds all men to the head of the race."—*Wilberforce*, p. 14. "As there is a recapitulation of *all*, in Heaven and earth in CHRIST, so there is a recapitulation of all in CHRIST in the Holy Sacrament."—*Bishop Andrew's Sermon of the Nativity.* In the language of theology, the tie formed in Baptism (renewed in Holy Communion) with CHRIST is so close, that in the famous words of S. LEO, "*Corpus regenerati fit caro Christi.*" "The body of the baptized

becomes the flesh of Jesus Christ." But if so, it is impossible to believe that the very flesh of CHRIST can be sent into an endless hell. Can JESUS CHRIST cut off, so to speak, His own flesh and sever it from Himself for ever? or rather, to state the case fully, can CHRIST assign a portion of Himself to the society of devils for ever? Is this at all credible? It is of very great interest to note how one like KEBLE seems to feel this. When dwelling on these aspects of Redemption, the cruel theology to which he clings drops off; and rising to true catholicity, he bids us view "CHRIST'S *least* and *worst with hope* to meet above;" and says in suggestive words, "*Christ's mark outwears the rankest blot.*" Need I again point out how these words involve universalism, for our Lord always teaches that those who have been brought nearest to Him and yet disobey, as do impenitent Christians, will fare worse in the final judgment than those who have never heard of Him.

I pass to consider the Atonement. Here we find this significant fact, that in God's plan it is the Creator of all who becomes the Redeemer of all. He, by whom all things were made at first is the same by whom all things are to be made anew. Redemption is second Creation, and is thus in the highest sense not contingent, but absolute and universal. St. PAUL'S words are significant—in *Col.* i., where he traces up to Creation the reconciliation of all things to God

by CHRIST. Because CHRIST was the Creator of all, therefore by Him the Father reconciles all things to Himself. Hence to make the parallel valid, the new Creation, which is Redemption, must be like the first absolute* (and not contingent). I mean, not contingent for its final issue (its completion) on anything but the supreme will. Clear as this seems, if the parallel S. PAUL draws be true, it seems clearer still when we notice the startling provision by which Adam is linked organically with every one of his race in the transmission of guilt. This tie is formed actually, universally, and independently of any volition. To call CHRIST the second Adam is either to dupe men, or it is to assert a tie equally organic and absolute with the whole human race. But it is said, that as men can shake off the heritage of Adam, so they may the grace of CHRIST: I reply (I.) so they may, *if* the grace of CHRIST be only as strong as the sin of Adam, which S. PAUL clearly denies. (II.) And, certainly, unless CHRIST AT THE LEAST REPLACES THE RACE IN PARADISE, He has not undone the evil of the Fall (a fact which is steadily denied, or ignored, by the traditional creed), and so is not the Second Adam.

Lastly, let us pursue the Incarnation into another field of thought, and contemplate in its

*I do not stop to illustrate this by the facts of heredity, &c. It is enough to say that God's idea or plan pre-supposes an indivisible unity of the race, and this involves universalism.

light the general Resurrection. "As in Adam all die, so in CHRIST shall all be made alive." Why is the obvious significance of these words lost sight of? To a collective death in Adam is opposed a collective life in CHRIST; to a fall, a rising again; to a loss, a gain, and that universal and absolute; one not dealing with individuals, but with the race. I say, *a gain*, necessarily; and as involved in the very idea of the Resurrection. For what is the Resurrection? It comes *only* through CHRIST, who not merely gives, but who IS the Resurrection and the life. It is thus the closest union with CHRIST; it is the gift of 'life,' 'power,' 'glory,' 'incorruption,' 'immortality,' as S. PAUL teaches. And to share all these, is surely necessarily to share blessedness; a point I must press. Again, death is in Scripture a name under which are grouped the results of sin. Hence to abolish death, as the Resurrection does, is to abolish sin and its results. But by the Resurrection death is swept away, is, indeed, extirpated; and so S. PAUL significantly *hopes* for the Resurrection of the unjust.—*Acts* xxiv. 15. Doubtless there is (and we are glad to admit it), a Resurrection of judgment.—*S. Jno.* v. 29. For judgment, as we shall see, is itself a part of the great scheme of salvation; and is curative, while, nay rather, *because* it is retributive. To this treatment of the impenitent dead, S. PAUL seems to allude in saying, "But every man in his own order: CHRIST the first fruits; afterward they that are CHRIST'S;" and so

we read of a first and second Resurrection, and may there not be many till the work of CHRIST has fully done its part, and the power of His Resurrection has asserted itself universally? And then cometh the end. All this will, I think, become clear, if we look briefly at S. PAUL's words. —*1 Cor.* xv. In vv. 35 and 42, it seems plain that he is speaking of the dead *generally;* not merely of those whom he distinguishes as 'they that are CHRIST'S.'—v. 23. So much seems clear. But note what he asserts of the dead, *en masse*, of all, "So is the Resurrection of 'the dead,' it is on this wise; it is a change from corruption to incorruption; from dishonour to glory; from weakness to power; it is to bear 'the image of the heavenly,' v. 49; it is to inherit 'the kingdom of God.'—v. 52. And this is said of *all.* But if so, what becomes of the ordinary view? for that affirms a Resurrection which brings death morally, and corruption, and misery; which brings the kingdom of the devil, not the kingdom of God. By what imaginable process can death, and blight, and evil be the result of that Resurrection which IS CHRIST? Ever to S. PAUL Resurrection is victory; the terms may be interchanged in his view. A Resurrection leading to the Devil's victory over CHRIST (for it is the Devil's victory to receive for ever so much as a solitary soul for which Jesus died), is essentially opposed to the spirit and letter of the Apostle's teaching. Then, he says, when this mortal puts on immortality, *as all shall do,* THEN shall

be brought to pass the saying, *death is swallowed up in victory*, death and that sin which is its sting.

I do not presume to discuss here the numerous questions raised by the Resurrection ; but I do protest against that shallow conception, which associates it with the body chiefly; which misses its central idea, as a gift of life through CHRIST, as a remoulding of the whole man; as bringing life and incorruption to all—to all, for it is the result of that Incarnation which deals not with individuals, but with the race. This spiritual conception we find strongly asserted even by many of those early writers, whose views of the Resurrection were, in some respects, largely material. The first traces of this teaching are perhaps in the works of those Fathers who seem to teach the extinction of the wicked. "It would," says S. IGNATIUS, "have been better for them to love, so that they might *rise*," *i.e.*, obtain the resurrection.—*Ad. Smyr.* vii.—See also *Ad. Trall.* ix. "He who rose from the dead will raise us up also, *if* we do His will," says S. POLYCARP.—*Ad. Phil.* ii. THEOPHILUS of Antioch teaches that those keeping God's Commandments "can be saved, and obtaining the Resurrection, can inherit incorruption."—*Ad. Aut.* ii. 27 ; and IRENÆUS (quoted p. 97), seems to take the same view. ARNOBIUS asks "what man does not see that, that which is immortal, cannot be subject to any pain ; and that that

cannot be immortal which does suffer pain?" —*Adv. gen.* ii. 14. The natural result of this would be the confining of the Resurrection to the saved, because to rise immortal and incorruptible is to be freed from pain and sin.

Passing on from those who teach annihilation, we find abundant early evidence to support the view which connects the resurrection with blessedness—See ATHENAGORAS, quoted p. 113; METHODIUS, p. 116. Again, S. HILARY is found speaking thus: "When the only begotten Son was about to reconcile to God *all things* in heaven, and on earth; . . when in Him *all* powers adverse to God were to be overcome; when death . . should come to an end . . by redeeming man from the law of sin—by making God an object of praise to all, and through all the eternities, by the gift and dignity of our immortality. Now *all* these things the *virtue of the Resurrection accomplished.*"—*In Ps.* lxviii. S. GREGORY of Nyssa abounds with such teaching as the following: "First of all we must surely consider what is the meaning (scopos) of the doctrine of the Resurrection. . . The Resurrection is the *restoration* of our nature to its pristine state."—*De an. et res.* "Therefore, like a potter's vase, man is resolved once more into clay, in order that (the defilements now adhering to him being separated) he may *be moulded anew into his original form, by the Resurrection.*"—*Cat orat.* c. viii. "Seeing that

our nature was originally formed as a vessel capable of good, . . but good did not keep its place, therefore, lest sin adhering to us should last for ever, the vessel is, by a kindly providence, dissolved for a time, in order that . . mankind should be remoulded and restored, free from the admixture of sin, to its former state. For that is the Resurrection, namely, the replacing of our nature in its former state."—*In fun. Pulch. orat.* To the same effect S. AMBROSE may be quoted, see p. 142. Again he teaches that: "The Resurrection was given that by death evil should end."—*De fugâ sæc.* "The Resurrection is that by which all the bonds of the enemy are loosed."—*In Ps.* xl. "Death is not to be feared, because it is an end of sin; and life is not to be despaired, which is restored by the Resurrection."—*De ob. Val.* So, too, the AMBROSIASTER. "On the *abolition* of sin, the Resurrection of the dead takes place."—*In Col.* ii. "The Resurrection," says an early author, "is the remoulding of our nature."—*De Sacr.* ii. 6. "Not to sin," says GENNADIUS, "belongs to the immortal and impassible nature."—*In Rom.* vi. 12. And so CYRIL says: "CHRIST gave Himself a ransom for all, that we might return to immortality."—*In Hos.* xii. In the same tone speaks CLEMENT of Alexandria.—*See Pæd.* iii. 1. From some antient Syriac scholia on the Gospels (translated by D. LOFTUS—*Dub. 1672*), I quote: "God raises in the Resurrection the body *freed from sin.*—Cap. xi. The school of Antioch seems to have

strongly insisted on this view of the Resurrection. DIODORUS has been quoted—p. 151, and so has THEODORE—p. 158-9. From the latter I add here: "CHRIST gave the Resurrection in order that, placed in an immortal nature, we should live free from all sin."—*In Rom.* v. 18. Sin accompanies those who are mortal, "but those who are become immortal are set free from it."—*ib.* viii. 3. "The Resurrection of the dead is the final (greatest) good."—*ib.* xi. "We are re-created by the Resurrection."—*In Eph.* ii. 10. In the same spirit THEODORET puts well the connection between the Resurrection of all and the Restoration of all. "In the future life the body, when made incorruptible and immortal, cannot admit the filth of sin."—*In Col.* ii. "For after the Resurrection, when our bodies become incorruptible and immortal, grace shall reign in them, *sin having no place left for it.* For when sufferings (pathôn) are put an end to (by the Resurrection), *sin will have no place.*"—*In Rom.* v. 21. Viewed thus, surely a clearer light falls on the Saviour's words, "I am the Resurrection and the Life," words which the Catholic creeds re-echo so suggestively, "I believe in . . the Resurrection of the dead and the Life everlasting"—the Resurrection as bringing to all life everlasting; the Life everlasting as linked with the Resurrection. This idea of the Resurrection might be further enforced by quotations; but space forbids my doing more than pointing to MAXIMUS and ERIGENA, as asserting practically

the view I have given, at a date comparatively late. Thus ERIGENA says: "At the time of the Resurrection, the soul shall receive everything subdued to it."—*De div. nat.* iv. 13.

From the Resurrection, let us pass by an easy transition to consider those texts which speak of 'death' and 'destruction' as the portion of the ungodly. To ascertain the true meaning, let us enquire what is meant by death. There are two answers commonly given. First comes that of the popular creed, which says death in the case of sinners means *living for ever* in pain and torment; so that I am actually required to believe that *death means life protracted for ever in pain*, and that destruction means preservation in eternal anguish! The recoil from such incredible teaching has produced the second view of 'death' as meaning 'annihilation,' now maintained by those who teach the doctrine of 'conditional immortality.'

In reply to this I would ask, in the words of an author already quoted, "are any of the varied deaths which Scripture speaks of as incident to man, his non-existence or annihilation? Take as examples the deaths referred to by S. PAUL, in the sixth, seventh, and eighth chapters of the Epistle to the *Romans*. We read (ch. vi. 7), 'He that is dead is free from sin.' Is this 'death' which is freedom from sin, non-existence or annihilation? Again, when the Apostle says (ch. vii. 9), 'I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came sin revived, and I died.' Was this 'death,' wrought in him by the law, annihilation? Again, when he says (ch. viii. 6). 'To be carnally minded is death,' is this death non-existence or annihilation? And again, when

he says (ch. viii. 38), 'Neither death nor life shall separate us,' is the 'death' here referred to annihilation? When ADAM died on the day he sinned (*Gen.* ii. 17), was this annihilation? when his body died, and turned to dust (*Gen.* v. 5), was this annihilation? Is our 'death in trespasses and sins' (*Eph.* ii. 1-2) annihilation? Is our 'death to sin' (*Rom.* vi. 11), annihilation? . . Do not these and similar uses of the word prove beyond all question, that whatever else these deaths may be, not one of them is non-existence or annihilation?"*

But if death be neither living for ever in pain, nor annihilation, what then is it? Death is bodily dissolution; it is for man 'a separation from some given form of life which he has lived in'; it is the way out of one state of being into another. Thus understood, how should death shut out hope? Nor is it really opposed to life, in fact it is a pathway to life; nay, the very condition of life in many cases. 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but *if it die* it bringeth forth much fruit.' *S. John* xii. 24.† Is there not here a great truth hinted at, of universal application? Is not the connection a very real and vital one between

*See pages 11-3 for some remarks on this theory, which I do not discuss at any length, persuaded that it has no prospect of permanent acceptance (i.) as being opposed to the deepest instincts of our nature (ii.) being founded on a wholly superficial view of Scripture (iii.) as leaving quite untouched the great central difficulty of the triumph of evil, *a point forgotten by its ablest champions* (iv.) as wholly contradicting the repeated promises of Scripture, that all things shall be restored through CHRIST. The great merit of this theory lies in its seeing clearly that the doom of sin is extinction.

†I confine myself, in attempting to bring out the true significance of 'death,' to the New Testament. In the Old Testament the threatenings of 'death' and 'destruction,' are, if not exclusively, mainly temporal, as are its rewards.

dying and life? and so the Apostle says that 'he that is *dead* is freed from sin,' *Rom.* vi. 7, *i.e.*, is alive to God. Cannot it be that this death threatened against the ungodly is, after all, the way, however sharp, to life even for them? as S. PAUL, *Rom.* xi. 15, asks, 'what shall the reconciling of them be but *life from the dead;*' on the view generally held these words, so significant to the thoughtful, lose all real force.

And yet those who uphold the popular creed assume that to die is the end of all hope to the sinful. A tradition, wholly unwarranted, has spread almost universally, which regards death as the close of our training; as assigning a limit beyond which CHRIST Himself has no power to save or to rescue. In both the letter and the spirit, this view contradicts at once the deductions of reason: the teachings of the early Church: and the express language of the New Testament. Indeed, to teach truer views of death seems one of the essential objects of the Gospel. Death is, in fact, the crossing from one stage of our journey to another. It is not an end; it is a transit; it is an episode in life. The day of death was by a true instinct named in the early church the day of birth. To teach that our training ends at death, is to say that a child's education ends with the nursery. Therefore, let me ask, on what authority is this doctrine taught, unknown to antiquity, unknown to Scripture? Who commissioned any to teach, that to die is to pass into

a state beyond the reach of CHRIST'S grace? If so, why are we told so significantly, the story of CHRIST'S evangelising the spirits in prison? Why does the Apostle tell us that the *Gospel was preached to the dead?* or why these repeated and exultant questions, 'O grave where is thy victory?' 'O death where is thy sting?' Why has the New Testament, with such varied illustrations, pressed on thus this fact, that CHRIST has overcome death, has destroyed death, if death is ever to put a stop to His power to save? So far from this, S. PAUL in aid of his argument in the famous chapter on the resurrection, invokes the analogy of nature, as shewing that death is a path to life, a condition of life. 'Thou fool,' says the great Apostle, 'that which thou sowest is not quickened *except it die.*'

"There is no gain except by loss,
There is no life except by death."

Who shall limit this truth in its operation? It certainly does hold good in the spiritual order —of that we are assured. 'IF we be *dead* with Him, we shall live with Him.'—2 *Tim.* ii. 11. 'We which live are always delivered unto *death* for JESUS' sake, that the *life* also of JESUS might be manifested in us.'—2 *Cor.* iv. 11. And so it is written, 'He that loseth his life shall save it'—a statement often repeated in the gospels. And 'if ye mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live.' Thus, too, the Psalmist strikingly prays, 'that the wicked may perish, in order that they

may know that God reigns over the earth.'—See, too, *Ps.* lxxxiii.17-8; *Ez.*xiii.14,xxxii.15. So,too, Elam is to be first consumed and then restored, —*Jer.* xlix. 37-9. Is not death then the very instrument by which God quickens the sinner, and that in two ways ? i. By the death of the body, which takes a man out of the present age into a state more fitted to rouse and to save. ii. By the death of the spirit, *i.e.*, its being searched through and through by God's fiery discipline—by His sharp surgery—till it die to sin and live to righteousness. In all this subject of death, there is a strange narrowness in the views yet held generally, as though the fact of dying could change God's unchanging purpose ; as though His never failing love were extinguished because we pass into a new state of existence ; as though the power of CHRIST'S cross were exhausted in the brief span of our earthly life. So far from this, has not CHRIST abolished *death?* Is He not Lord of the *dead?* Did He not evangelise the *dead?* Has He not the keys of *death?* On the popular view, what depth of meaning can you assign to these words ? But it may be said, is there not the second death ? Yes, assuredly. But though it were not the second merely, but the thousandth death, yet it is *but death:* and death *absolutely*, in every degree and power, is destroyed,is blotted out ; or there is no real meaning in S. PAUL'S song of triumph.—*1 Cor.* xv. No true victory has been won by CHRIST if the second death is too strong for him.

Lastly, let me say that this view of 'death' and 'destruction' and 'perishing' is no expedient devised in these days to meet a difficulty, but has the fullest theological authority. Few are aware how large, and how weighty is the patristic evidence in its favor. It is hardly possible to exaggerate the significance of this, in demolishing the edifice of conditional immortality, as well as the traditional creed. We can quote Father upon Father; witness after witness, alike in East and West, who tell us that the sinner's 'death' and 'destruction' is the Great Artist re-moulding His own work; is the Physician healing, not annihilating. To pulverise the sinner, to break him in pieces, to destroy, to slay, ALL MEAN REFORMATION. Such is the testimony of a crowd of illustrious names, to most of whom the language of the New Testament was familiar as the language of their every-day life. So S. CLEMENT asserts that "the law in ordering the sinner to be put to death designs his being brought from death to life."—*Strom. lib.* vii. In the same sense ORIGEN comments on the words, "When He slew them then they sought Him."—*Psalm* lxxviii. 34. "He does not say that some sought Him after others had been slain, but He says that the destruction of those who were killed was of such a nature that, when put to death, they sought God."—*De prin.* ii. 5, iii. "The Scriptures," says S. METHODIUS (3rd century), usually call destruction the turning to the better at some future time."—*De resur.* ix. Of this

teaching METHODIUS is full, as the extracts already given shew. S. GREGORY, of Nyssa, has very much to the same effect. "By death the soul arises from death."—*In Cant. Cantic.* Perhaps the most striking passage is one in which he refers to the 'second death.' "They who live in the flesh ought, by virtuous conversation, to free themselves from fleshly lusts, lest *after death, they should again need another death,* to cleanse away the remains of fleshly vice that cling to them." —*De anin. et res.* This shows this eminent Father as teaching the cleansing and healing agency of even the 'second death.' Again we find S. GREGORY thus writing on the 59th Psalm, where the destruction of God's enemies is spoken of. "From this consideration we understand that there will not be a destruction of the individuals themselves, lest *God's handiwork should come to nothing,* but that in place of their persons their *sin shall perish,* and shall be annihilated. * * For when no guilt *is any where left,* God shall be sovereign of the ends of the earth; when the evil that now reigns over many shall have been taken away." "When the Psalmist prays, let sinners and the unrighteous be destroyed, he is (really) praying that sin and unrighteousness may perish * * His prayer is that sin may come to an end."—*De orat. Or.* i. The passage continues thus—"And if there be found any such prayer elsewhere (in the Scriptures), it has exactly the same meaning, viz., that of expelling the sin, and not of destroying

the man."—*Ib.* "Nor is death in the case of men anything but the cleansing of his wickedness."—*In fun. Pul.* S. GREGORY, of Nazianzus, has been already quoted, p. 125. A further passage will be found.—*Arcan. carm.* vii. S. BASIL teaches the same view of God's destroying sinners, p. 128. I may quote here, "God will slay him who lives sinfully, in order that having cleansed his old life he may give him a new one."—*In Is.* i. S. HILARY has been quoted to the same general effect. So have EUSEBIUS and RUFINUS, MACARIUS MAGNES, TITUS of Bostra, S. CLEMENT of Alexandria, S. CHRYSOSTOM, and CYRIL of Alexandria; to these I might add MAXIMUS and DIDYMUS. It would be hardly possible to adduce a stronger chain of testimony, whether the number or the weight of the witnesses is considered.

I now turn to S. JEROME, whose views on this point have already been given, p. 150. The following is interesting—"All God's enemies shall perish, not that they shall cease to exist, but *cease to be enemies.*" And note how far S. JEROME pushes this principle, even it would seem to asserting the salvation of the 'Man of sin,' for the passage proceeds thus—"Just as S. PAUL writes to the Thessalonians (of the Man of sin), whom the Lord shall slay with the breath of His mouth. (So) this slaying signifies *not annihilation*, but the *cessation of the evil life*, in which they formerly used to live."—*In Mic.* v. 8.

Elsewhere S. JEROME represents God as saying, "I slay to this end that I may quicken."—*In Is.* lvii. So referring to *Is.* xxxiv., where awful threats of destruction are made against Edom, S. JEROME says the object is in order 'that it may die to the devil, not actually: but may live to God.'—*In Ez.* xxix. S. AMBROSE has been fully quoted, p. 140. From the AMBROSIASTER I take the following, on the words, 'They shall perish.' "They perish while they are being changed for the better."—*In Heb.* i. And so in the Sibylline Books, the wicked first *perish*, and afterwards are *saved*.—*lib.* ii. 255. A long passage in MAXIMUS declares death to be a divinely appointed medicine.—*Ambig.* iii. "God, dispensing *salvation*, rightly assigned death as a penalty."—*ib.* ii.

And what is true of 'death' as threatened against the sinner is true no less of 'judgment,' even in its most extreme form. We are not without very distinct teaching in Holy Scripture on this point. So the 'typical' judgment, that on Adam, was embedded in blessing; conveyed blessing. Thus, again, I shall have to notice how, in the minor Prophets, the vision of universal bliss is ever associated with a vision of '*judgment*.' Why is this so significantly done? It is because the way to blessedness lies *through* the Divine judgments. In these often unperceived connections lies surely much of the deepest teaching of Holy Scripture. On the popular

view this connection of judgment and blessedness loses all meaning. 'Judgment,' in fact, like 'fire,' is the portion of *all*, and not of the sinner merely. It must begin at the house of God. 'He scourgeth *every* son whom He receiveth.' True—you may say of the son—but what of the sinner, is there hope for him in God's judgments? Does God's judgment mean mercy in his case? Surely, I reply: of this truth Scripture is full. Take for instance S. PETER'S words, as he tells the story of the preaching of CHRIST to the spirits in prison (a passage that even if it stood alone would show how untenable is the popular view as to the state after death). The spirits are specially described as those of the *disobedient* dead—those who rejected NOAH'S preaching. From their case S. PETER turns to speak to the ungodly of his own day, and warns them, that they shall have to give account to Him who is ready to judge the quick and dead. And mark what follows: 'For this cause,' he adds, 'was the gospel preached, (even) to the *dead*, that they might be *judged* according to men in the flesh, but *live* according to God in the spirit.' Note, carefully, that here we have (i.) judgment bringing to the *sinner* not condemnation, but life (ii.) the principle of salvation by judgment extended beyond this life (iii.) extended to those who neglected, while living, the greatest light then available; and died impenitent.

Would you have further proof? Consider

next what S. PAUL says of the case of HYMENÆUS and ALEXANDER—*1 Tim.* i. 20. They had put away a good conscience, had become blasphemers, had made shipwreck of faith. He thereupon hands *them over to Satan.* You can hardly imagine a more desperate state—thrust by Apostolic authority out of God's Church, and handed over to God's enemy, and that after having made shipwreck of their faith. But what follows? It is that they may *learn* not to blaspheme. This terrible judgment was a cure—a path to life and restoration. As an old Father puts it, "Sinners are handed over to the Devil. Wherefore? That they may perish eternally? And where then is the mercy of God? Where is the tender Father? What the Apostle says is this, I have handed over sinners to the Devil, that, tormented by him, they may be converted to me." Another equally striking instance is furnished by the case of the incestuous Corinthian. I have judged already . . to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be SAVED."—*1 Cor.* v. 3-5. And so, as it has been well put, this wretched Corinthian was, as we know, delivered *from* the power of the Devil, by being delivered *into* the power of the Devil. Few more suggestive passages exist in the New Testament. Here is a man delivered by Apostolic authority—in the name of JESUS CHRIST—to Satan, handed over to Satan. But mark the object and the result. It is to end not in misery

but in joy—not in death but in life—say rather in life attained by means of God's awful judgment. What light is thus thrown (for are not these things written for our learning ?) on the mysterious subject of God's judgments—nay of His vengeance. "O mon ame sois tranquille et attends en paix le jour des vengeances eternelles, c'est le jour de CHRIST, et ce sont les vengeances de CHRIST. C'est donc *un jour de salut, et ce sont des vengeances d'amour.*"—G. MONOD, *Le Judgment dernier*, p. 28. So note the juxta-position (in CHRIST) of the 'helmet' of *salvation*, and 'garments of *vengeance.*'—*Is.* lix. 17. So the 'day of vengeance' and the 'year of redemption,' and the 'day of vengeance' and 'the acceptable year' are linked together.—*Is.* lxi. 2; lxiii. 4; xxxv. 4. So in *Ps.* xcix. 8, forgiveness and vengeance go hand in hand. So do, in *Hab.* iii. 8, 12, 13, God's wrath and his chariots of salvation. In this connection, as shewing how the utmost conceivable severity of the Divine judgments is consistent with final salvation, I ask you next to remember how S. PAUL tells of Israel that 'wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.'—1 *Thess.* ii. 16. The wrath of God to the *uttermost!* and yet the same Apostle tells us that *all Israel shall be saved!* Weigh well these words, and what they convey. It is as though the cup of Divine vengeance was drained to the last drop, as though God had exhausted all His vials of anger, and left Himself no more that He could do. And even then does

all this wrath mean that hope is at an end, that salvation is impossible? It means the very reverse. Not only is hope still remaining, not merely is there a chance of salvation, but salvation is promised, is assured; nay, salvation in its amplest form—salvation to the uttermost (for *all* Israel shall be saved)—is the end of wrath to the uttermost.

And so the fact of God's coming to judgment is a matter of deep joy. The Psalmist, *Ps.* lxvii. 4; xcvi. 11-3; xcviii. 6-9, bids the sea to roar, the floods to clap their hands, the hills to sing for joy, at the prospect of judgment (as being a part of the great scheme of redemption). So deeply important at once, and yet so generally misunderstood is this (the only true and Scriptural view of judgment), that it will be needful to examine more closely the testimony of God's word on this point. The more we study its pages, the more clear does the fact become, that *salvation is essentially linked with the divine judgments.* "Thou, Lord, art merciful," says the Psalmist, "for thou renderest to every man according to his work." Here is the essence of the question—*retribution is mercy, judgment means salvation.* "The thought," says MAURICE, "of God's ceasing to punish is the real—the unutterable horror. Wrath is not the counteracting force to love, but the attribute of it." So the prophet appears to tell us that Israel has been pardoned *because* she has been punished.—

Is. xl. 1-2. So it is said, "Zion shall be *redeemed with judgment.*"—*Is.* i. 27. When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness, for the Lord is a *God of judgment.*"—*Is.* xxvi. 9. "A king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in *judgment*, and a man shall be an hiding place from the wind."—*Is.* xxxii. 1. "I will make my *judgment* to rest for a light of the people. . . My *salvation* is gone forth."—*Is.* li. 4-5. Again, speaking of CHRIST as the branch, the Prophet tells how "He shall execute *judgment* . . in the land. In those days Judah shall be *saved.*"—*Jer.* xxxiii. 15. And "I will *betroth thee unto me* for ever . . *in judgment* and in mercy."—*Hos.* ii. 19. "Arise, O God, *judge* the earth, for thou shalt *inherit all* nations."—*Ps.* lxxxii. 2. "Thy *judgments* are a great deep, O Lord, thou *preservest* man and beast."—*Ps.* xxxvi. 6. "Therefore will he be exalted that he may have *mercy* . . for the Lord is a God of *judgment.*"—*Is.* xxx. 18. See, too, *Ps.* lxxvi. 9; cxix. 43; xxv. 9; *Is.* xxxiii. 22; xlii. 1-4; *Obad.* 21, &c.; *Ezech.* xxxiv. 16, &c.

From the New Testament I have already given some quotations, but ample proof remains worthy of our closest study, and shewing the true meaning of judgment, alike here and hereafter, as *conveying salvation.* Take for instance the context, so often overlooked, of our Lord's famous words, *S. John* xii. 32—"Now is the

judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me," *i.e.*, the judgment of the world is the salvation of the world, is the drawing of all men to CHRIST. No less striking are the words of S. PAUL, which refer to the last judgment, and shew conclusively that, that Great Day brings salvation to all who are judged. Turn to *Rom.* xiv. 10—"We must all stand before the judgment seat of CHRIST," must each render his account to God. But that is far from being the only object of that judgment. Its main and essential purpose is *salvation.* To shew this is easy. For note, that to illustrate the purpose of God in judging, S. PAUL here quotes from *Is.* xlv. 23, which runs thus—"Look unto me and be ye SAVED, *all ye ends of the earth*, for I am God, . . I have sworn by myself that unto me every knee shall bow. . . The word is gone out, and shall not return;" it *must* be fulfilled, *i.e.*, God's purpose of salvation must reach effectually the entire race. But this prophetic assertion of a *universal* salvation is here quoted by the Apostle, and is *linked with the Day of Judgment, which, according to him, it describes.* In that Judgment, S. PAUL sees not the final damnation of any man, but the fulfilment of the prophetic promise—a pledge that salvation shall reach every soul of man. Do pause, and realise the full significance of this! Beyond the grave, after death, and its changes, we have S. PAUL looking on to the closing scene;

to that Judgment which winds up the great drama of life, and sin, and redemption. And as the Apostle looks he sees in the very Judgment* a process of salvation, he sees a picture bright with hope for every human soul—a picture which he can only describe in terms of the joyful outburst of the prophet, "Look unto me and *be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth.*"

Bearing all this in mind, a light, clear and distinct, falls on those words of S. PAUL (so unintelligible on the ordinary view), where he declares the gospel to be "the power of God unto salvation, . . for therein is the wrath of God revealed." Note salvation and wrath linked together; *salvation because the wrath* of God is revealed against all sin. S. PETER'S teaching on this point has been already referred to. The thoughtful reader will note further that the 'times of restitution of all things' come when Jesus returns, *Acts* iii. 21, but he returns *to judge* the quick and the dead. Let us next take an interesting passage from S. JOHN, "I saw another angel, having the everlasting gospel to proclaim to all them that dwell on the earth, and he said, fear God and give Him glory, for the hour of His judgment is come."—*Rev.* xiv. 6. Note the *everlasting gospel* proclaimed—how? By *God's judgments.*

*So the Creed, "He shall come to judge the quick and the dead, Whose kingdom shall have no end." Thus Judgment leads to the setting up of CHRIST'S universal empire: and so (suggestively) the Judge sits on a *white* throne—(sign of amity).—*Rev.* xx. 11.

This view of God's judgment is, be it noted, no modern fancy; it is precisely the teaching of antient Catholic Fathers, which I shall here give. Take in proof S. JEROME'S very striking comment on *Zeph.* iii. 8-10. There, speaking of the Day of Judgment and its terrors, he says: "The nations are gathered to the Judgment, . . that on them may be poured out *all the wrath of the fury of the Lord*, . . and this . . in *pity*, and with a design to *heal*—for the nations being assembled for judgment, in order that wrath may be poured out on them; not in part but in whole, *both wrath and fury being united*; then, whatever is earthly is consumed in the whole world, . . in order that *every one may return* to the confession of the Lord, that in JESUS' name every knee may bow, and every tongue may confess that He is Lord." Need I point out the extreme significance of these words? They are unhesitating in their frank recognition of, nay, in the emphasis laid on '*the wrath of the fury of the Lord*,' '*the whole mass both of wrath and fury*.' But this 'wrath of fury' is but a proof of love, a means of salvation. The Great Day of Wrath that *is to burn like fire*, and to *consume* the adversaries of God, burns up only what is earthy, bringing to every sinner salvation. Again, we have S. JEROME commenting on *Rom.* i. 18. 'Therein is the wrath of God revealed against all ungodliness,' "where wrath is revealed it is *not* inflicted; it does not smite, but it is revealed in order that it may terrify, and

may not be inflicted on the terrified." — *In Hab.* iii. So deeply important, and so unfamiliar to the great majority, is this aspect of patristic teaching, that I feel it right to continue these quotations in proof of God's judgment, as implying to *all* men salvation. I give next the substance of an interesting passage on the final judgment from the same Father. Writing on *Micah* vii. 17, he compares the wicked to serpents, who, as they creep over the earth, drag along with them earthly matter. So the wicked, who bring with them a mass of earthly sinful matter to God's judgment (the original is very emphatic in dwelling on the mass of sin), 'shall be troubled *so long as the sinful matter clings to them.*' But when (by the judgment) this has been cleared away, they too shall end by fearing God. Next, I quote the following: "I shall judge thee in order that in this (judgment) I may shew forth my mercy, like a physician, who does not spare in order that he may spare."—*In Ezech.* xxiv. Again, an old commentator on the Psalter says pithily, "Great is the Lord's anger when He is *not angry!*"

Equally forcible and clear is the teaching of S. GREGORY of Nyssa. "Therefore the Divine judgment does not, as its chief object, cause pain to those who have sinned, but *works good alone* by separating from evil, and drawing to a share in blessedness. But this severance of good from evil causes the pain (of the judgment)." In

other words, the penalty is the cure ; it is merely the unavoidable pain attending the removal of the intruding element of sin.—*De an. et resur.* And again: If this (sin) be not cured here, its cure is postponed to a future life. As sharp *remedies* for obstinate cases, so God announces His future judgment *for the cure* of the diseases of the soul, and *(note these words)* "that judgment uses threats to the lazy and vain, . . in order that, through fear, we may be trained to avoiding evil ; *but by those who are more intelligent, it* (the judgment) *is believed to be a medicine,** a *cure* from God, who is bringing the creature, which he has formed, back to that state of grace which first existed."—*Cat. orat.* viii.

I leave these words without further comment to the thoughtful reader, who will readily see all they imply. It will be interesting to compare with them the following from DIDYMUS : "For although the judge at times inflicts tortures and anguish on those who merit them, yet he who *more deeply scans* the reasons of things, perceiving the purpose of His goodness, who desires to amend the sinner, confesses Him to be good. He who is our Lord and Saviour inflicts on us everything that may lead us to salvation : inflicting on us according to His mercy, yet doing this

*S. GREGORY does not mean to deny the terror of the Judgment Day. Hear his words. "*All creation trembles*, who is without fear ? Not even the angels, though they have no account to render, yet the glorious presence (of God) causes fear to all."—*In verba fac. hom. orat.* ii.

in His judgment."—*De Sp. Sanc. lib.* ii. Again, writing on the *Psalms*, S. GREGORY says that the wrath of God, which is to swallow up the sinful, is not wrath at all. "In the case of God, His wrath, though to sinners it seems wrath, and is so called by them, is nothing less than wrath *(i.e., is not wrath at all)*, but as a *quasi-wrath* comes to those who, according to God's justice, call it a retribution, but *God Himself is not really angry.*" ORIGEN goes quite as far as S. GREGORY or S. JEROME. "When thou hearest of the wrath of God, believe not that this wrath is a passion of God. It is a condescension of language, designed to convert and improve the child. . . So God is described to us as angry, in order to our conversion and improvement, when in truth He is not angry."—*Ed. Huet. f.* 378. So the old commentator on the Psalms (in S. JEROME) says on *Ps.* vii., that God "awaits the day of vengeance with a *quasi-wrath*, in order that He may correct (amend) by fear the sinner." To the same general effect write S. BASIL, p. 128; S. GREGORY of Nazianzus, p. 126; and S. CLEMENT, p. 111.

Perhaps in nothing is the shallowness of the traditional creed so fully shewn, as in its view of fire as only or chiefly a penal agent. "Fire, in Scripture, is the element of 'life' *(Is.* iv. 5), of 'purification' *(Matt.* iii. 3), of 'atonement' *(Lev.* xvi. 27), of 'transformation' (*2 Peter* iii. 10), and *never of* 'preservation alive' for

purposes of anguish." And the popular view selects precisely this latter use, never found in Scripture, and represents it as the *sole* end of God's fiery judgments! If we take either the teaching of Scripture or of nature, we see that the one dominant conception of fire is of a beneficent agent. Nature tells us that fire is the condition of life; its mission is to sustain life; and to purify, even when it dissolves. Extinguish the stores of fire in the universe, and you extinguish all being; universal death reigns. Most strikingly is this connection of fire and life shewn in the facts of nutrition. For we actually burn in order to live; our food is the fuel; our bodies are furnaces; our nutrition is a process of combustion; we are, in fact, "aflame to the very tips of our fingers." And what Nature teaches, Scripture enforces in no doubtful tone. It is significant to find the Great Source of all life constantly associated with fire in the Bible. Fire is the sign, not of God's wrath, but of His being. When He appears to MOSES it is in fire; when He answers ELIJAH, on Carmel, it is by fire; and in fire ELIJAH himself ascends to God. So fire is said "to go before God," His throne is of fire —*Dan.* vii. 9: His eyes are lamps of fire; He is a wall of fire.—*Zech.* ii. 5. But, if God be love, then by what but by love can His fires be kindled? They are, in fact, the very flame of love; and so we have the key to the words, "Thy God is a consuming fire," and "Thy God is a merciful God."—*Deut.* iv. 24-31. So God

devours the earth with fire in order to save it.—*Zeph.* iii. 8-9. So the Prophet ISAIAH tells us of God's cleansing the daughters of Zion by . . . the spirit of burning (ch. iv. 4)—suggestive words. And, so again, 'By *fire* will the Lord plead with *all* flesh.'—*Is.* lxvi. 16.

A few words must be added as to the true place 'fire' holds in the teaching of the New Testament. It, like judgment, so far from being the sinner's portion only, is the portion of *all.* Like God's judgment, again it is not future merely, but present; it is '*already kindled,*' *i.e.*, always kindled: its object is not torment but cleansing. The proof is easy and unanswerable, coming from the lips of our Lord Himself. He it is who says, "I am come *to send fire on the earth,*" words that in fact convey all I am seeking to teach, for it is certain that He came as a Saviour. Thus coming to *save*, CHRIST comes *with fire*, nay, with fire already kindled. He comes to baptise with the Holy Ghost, and *with fire.* Therefore, it is that CHRIST teaches in a solemn passage (usually misunderstood, *S. Mark* ix. 43) that *every one* shall be salted with fire. And so the "fire is to try *every man's* work." He whose work fails is saved (mark the word *saved), not damned* 'so as by fire,' for God's fire, by consuming what is evil, saves and refines. The antient tradition that represents CHRIST as saying, "He that is near me is near fire," expresses a vital truth. So MALACHI describes

CHRIST as being in His saving work 'Like a refiner's fire' (ch. iii. 3). And so, echoing a passage from the Old Testament, just quoted, we are told that "*Our* God is a consuming fire," *i.e.*, God in His closest relation to us: God is love: God is spirit: but '*Our* God is a consuming fire!'—a consuming fire, "by which the *whole material substance of sin is* destroyed." We, then, who teach hope for all men, do not shrink from, but accept, *in their fullest meaning*, these mysterious 'fires' of Gehenna, of which CHRIST speaks (kindled for purification), as in a special sense the sinner's doom in the coming ages. If, as the Bible plainly teaches, *all* must pass through 'the fires,' then for the sinner doubtless a far sharper fire must be kindled hereafter. But taught by the clearest statements of Scripture (confirmed as they are by all the analogies of nature), we see in these 'fires' not a denial of, but a mode of fulfilling the assured promise—"Behold, I *make all things new.*"

Abundant quotations might be made from the Fathers in support of the above view of fire. Let S. AMBROSE speak. Writing on *Ps.* i., he says: "The fiery sword at the gate of Paradise shews that he who returns to it comes back by fire." To the same effect speak other Fathers. S. HILARY writes: "They that are baptised with the Holy Ghost are yet to be perfected by the fire of judgment." From ORIGEN I take the following: As bodily diseases require some

nauseous drug, or it may be the amputating knife, or if this fail, actual cautery, "how much more is it to be understood that God, our Physician . . should employ, for healing, penal measures, and even the punishment of fire. . . The *fury of God's vengeance* is profitable for the purgation of souls. That the punishment, which is said to be applied by fire, is *applied with the object of healing*, is taught by *Isaiah* iv. 4."—*De prin.* ii. x. S. JEROME, as usual, has much that is interesting on this subject of fire. Writing on AMOS iv., he says: "Fire is God's *last medicine* for the ten tribes, and for heretics, and for *all sinners*," that after God has tried death and destruction, and they have not even then repented, "he may overthrow them as He did Sodom and Gomorrah; that when overthrown, and when the Divine fire shall have burned up all that is vilest in them, *they themselves shall be delivered* as a brand snatched from the burning." The following is of interest as bearing both on 'judgment' and on 'fire.' "For penalties are inflicted on those who are ailing to this end, that a *cure* may come after the pain. Therefore (*i.e.*, to effect a cure) the world which '*lieth in wickedness*' is burned with Divine fire in the day of judgment, and the bloody city is laid upon coals of fire."*—*In Ezech.* xxiv. From S. JEROME's comment on *Hab.* ii., I take the following:

*See *Is.* xlvii. 14—5, quoted by ORIGEN and S. JEROME, where the Septuagint has a remarkable reading—"Thou hast coals of fire, sit upon them, they will be to thee a help."

"When they perish in fire . . or are destroyed in the fire of their prince the devil, or certainly are burnt in the fire of which the Lord said, 'I am come to send fire on the earth,' and are (thus) *brought back from their former ways and do penance*, the whole earth shall be full of the glory of the Lord." I shall only say further that S. JEROME's commentaries are full of this teaching, see, *e.g.*, his remarks on *Mal.* iii. 2-3; *Hos.* iv. 14; *Joel* ii. 4; *Amos* vii. 4, &c., &c. Thus on *Nahum* iii. 13, he speaks of God's wrath as "*cleansing* by means of the fire of hell (Gehenna)." Again, commenting on *Obad.* i. 18, S. JEROME says: "This (flame) shall devour ESAU for his salvation, . . so that ESAU shall be no more (*i.e.*, as ESAU, as evil) at that Day when every knee shall bow to CHRIST in order that God may be all in all." Again, in a striking passage, the same Father speaks of the soul as begging God to *burn* its fleshly parts and open its wounds . . . that it may suffer so many torments, and afterwards receive a cure. . . Finally, after tortures and punishments, the *soul brought forth from the outer darkness, and having paid the very last farthing*, says, I shall behold His righteousness. . . Now he who after God's wrath, says that he sees God's righteousness (justification) promises himself the sight of CHRIST."—*In Micah* vii. I must also add a pithy utterance of the old commentator (in S. JEROME), speaking of God, he says, "He is *fire*, that He may expel the Devil's cold."—*In*

Ps. cxlvii. To the same effect much might be quoted from S. GREGORY, of Nyssa. "The evil man will not become a sharer in the divine nature, till the cleansing fire shall have removed the stains mingled with the soul."—*Orat de mort.* Elsewhere he says that water and fire have a cleansing effect. "They who have not shared the mystical cleansing of water, must be cleansed by fire."—*Cat. orat.* xxxv. In the same spirit he writes, that as God's purpose to cleanse from sin the human race cannot fail, so those who are not healed in the present "shall be hereafter cleansed at fitting times by fire."—*De an. et resurr.* And again, "In the same mode, the soul which is united to sin must be set in the fire, *till* that which is unnatural and vile . . be removed, consumed by the *eternal fire.*"—*Ib.* Here note, S. GREGORY distinctly teaches that the *eternal (aionios) fire is temporary and purgatorial.** "This fire," he goes on to say, "shall be kindled for a longer or a shorter period, in proportion to the amount of sin needing to be cleansed away."

There remains for our consideration a very important class of passages, supposed, but, as I shall hope to show, erroneously, to favour the popular creed. These passages—to which I would now briefly advert—are those that speak

*It is interesting to note that the Latin version of S. GREGORY though usually very fair, in this instance *omits to translate the weighty and significant aionios of the original.*

of the 'elect,' and their fewness; of the 'many' called, but the 'few' chosen. That God's election is a doctrine clearly revealed in Scripture, none can doubt: although, unfortunately, around few subjects has the battle of controversy been so furiously waged. One great party has, in affirming God's election—which is true—so affirmed it as to make Him into an arbitrary and cruel tyrant—which is false. But the truer and deeper views of God's plan of mercy through JESUS CHRIST—now in the ascendant I trust—teach us to affirm distinctly the doctrine of the Divine election of 'the few;' and just because we so affirm it, to connect with it purposes of *universal* mercy. For what is the true end and meaning of God's election, when rightly understood? The elect, we reply, are chosen, not for themselves only, but for the sake of others. They are 'elect,' not merely to be blessed, but to be a source of blessing. God's choice of 'the few' is not designed to terminate with them. It is not merely with the paltry object of saving a few, while the vast majority perish, that God elects; it is with a Divine purpose; a purpose of mercy to all; it is by 'the few' to save 'the many;' by the elect to save the world. "If you go to Scripture," says Dr. Cox, "you will find this its constant teaching. Even in those early days when one man, one family, one nation, were successively chosen, to be the depositories of Divine truth, when, therefore, if ever we might expect to find the redemptive purpose of God

disclosed within narrow and local limitations; when unquestionably it was much fettered and restrained by personal promises, and by national and temporary institutions; the Divine purpose is for ever overstepping every limit, every transient localisation and restraint, and claiming, as its proper share, all the souls that are and shall be." This admits of easy proof. Take a typical case to show what God's election really means. Take the case of ABRAHAM, the father and founder of God's elect people. What was the promise to him? 'That in his seed should *all the families of the earth* be blessed.' This was of the essence of God's election. And to this effect S. PAUL speaks with perfect clearness. The promise to ABRAHAM was, he tells us, that he should be the heir of the *world*, *Rom.* iv. 13; words most expressive, and yet without meaning on the common view of election. In other words the Jews, as God's elect, have, as their inheritance, all lands, all peoples. In the same Epistle (to the Romans) S. PAUL points out how close the connection is between Israel and the world. Three times over he asserts their very fall to be the riches of the world, and asks if so, what will not the reconciling of Israel be (to the world). In short, on God's elect people hangs the lot and destiny of mankind—see *Gal.* iii. 8, and *Acts* iii. 21-5; the latter passage is very interesting, for S. PETER there asserts the connection between a *universal* restoration, and the promise to ABRAHAM, *i.e.*, his election. These topics have

been already touched on in earlier chapters, but without again referring to them here, I could not have given any clear view of the Divine election —as a fact undoubtedly taught in Scripture, and yet implying a purpose of mercy to all. A further admirable illustration of this may be given (furnished by Holy Scripture) from its teaching as to the 'first fruits,' and as to the 'first born.' Israel, as God's elect, is the 'first fruits'—Israel the 'first born.' But the 'first fruits' imply and pledge the *whole* harvest; the 'first born' involve and include in the Divine economy the *whole* family (as indeed has been said in a former chapter). "The first born and first fruits are the 'few' and the 'little flock;' but these, although 'first delivered from the curse,' have *relation to the whole creation*, which shall be saved in the appointed times by the first born seed, that is by CHRIST and His body." It is thus clear that we, so far from denying or weakening the election of the *few*, lay stress on it. Rightly viewed, God's electing grace stands, not opposed to, but in complete agreement with the widest hope for all men. It becomes indeed a corner stone, so to speak, in the edifice of the world's salvation; for His 'elect' few are the very means by which our Father designs to bless all His children—designs to work out His plan of universal salvation.

A few closing remarks are needed here, to indicate the principle that is really at stake in

these questions. For that principle is vital, and fundamental. It is no less than the unity of the Godhead ; no less than the first article of the Creed,' I believe in *one* God the Father Almighty ' —in God who is ONE, not in nature alone, but in purpose and in will—one and unchanging. But in place of this God, the popular creed presents us with a Being who fluctuates between tenderness and wrath ; one who has ever-changing plans, and a will that is divided, and baffled. For half His creatures, His love is in fact momentary, and His vengeance eternal. For the other half, His pity is eternal, and His wrath transient. This God is not even Lord in His own house ; for the worst and feeblest of His creatures can defeat His most cherished plan ; can paralyze the Cross of CHRIST. In such a God I can see no trace of Him, who is almighty and unchanging, whose property is *always* to have mercy ; whose love, though it must take the form of vengeance against sin, never ceases to pursue the sinner, for " love never faileth ;" *never* to all eternity. Against the popular caricature of God, this chapter is thus a special protest—that caricature which represents eternal love as turning to hate, as soon as the sinner dies ; which vainly talks of an Eternal Father, whose judgments mean salvation in one world, and change to damnation in the next ; of eternal love, whose fire purifies and refines in time, and then beyond the grave turns to mere (purposeless) torture. All this is not alone morally repulsive, but is a plain contradiction in terms.

Against this mass of contradiction stands the view I have been advocating of 'death,' 'judgment,' 'fire,' 'election.' It rests on a principle simple and, I believe, quite irrefragable. It rests, as I have said, ultimately on the Divine *unity*—unity of essence, and unity of design. As God is one and immutable, so is His purpose of salvation one, immutable, and unfailing. God's essential unity is destroyed when we assign to Him conflicting actions, as though His love demanded one course of action, and His justice another; as though God the Saviour were one person, and God the Judge a wholly different one. Or, again, when we blindly teach that if His judgments now mean salvation, they at the Great Day mean endless damnation. God, I repeat, in His 'judgments,' in His 'fires,' in 'death,' in 'election;' God in time and in eternity is one and the same God (*Heb.* xiii. 8), and has, and must have to all eternity, but one unchanging purpose—is and must be for ever God our Saviour. The Divine Unity is no merely abstract question: it reveals God's essence and character; it is rooted not in the laws of number, but of spirit and will. When ZECHARIAH says, 'The Lord shall be king over all the earth,' he adds, 'in that day shall the Lord be *one*, and His name *one*.' And S. PAUL, in declaring that God 'will have all men to be saved,' bases this not on God's love but on His unity, 'for there is ONE God,' He who is One in All, and All in One, who will finally bring back His entire

creation to that unity from which it started. Those who are not moved by any words of mine, may perhaps lay to heart the words of one of the most eminent Fathers. To sever God's action into love and harshness is, says S. GREGORY, but madness, *nay, the 'madness of idle babblers!'* At the bare idea that God can be really hard or cruel to His enemies (see note on *S. Luke* vi. 27), and loving to His friends, the Saint exclaims with a scorn (most rare in his writings)—"Oh, the madness of these babblers! for if God is unmerciful to His foes, He will not be truly kind even to thee His friend."—*De orat.* 1.

CHAPTER VII.

"*WHAT THE OLD TESTAMENT TEACHES.*"

"From the time at which this great and far-reaching promise or gospel was given to ABRAHAM, the universal scope of the Divine redemption is insisted on with growing emphasis, even in those Hebrew Scriptures, which we too often assume to be animated only by a local and national spirit."—*Salvator Mundi.*

From the Church I next turn to the Old Testament. There we shall find abundant, perhaps to many readers, unexpected confirmation of the larger hope, though I can merely attempt to give an outline, and that a brief one, of its teaching. True, in the Old Testament, the promises are, it may be said, mainly temporal; but still we have unmistakable evidence of a plan of mercy revealed in its pages, and destined to embrace all men. Nor need this interpretation of the older volume of God's word rest on mere conjecture: let me call as a witness, no less a person than the Apostle S. PETER. He shall tell us what the true teaching of the Old Testament on this subject is. The Apostle in one of the very earliest of his addresses, *Acts* iii. 21, takes occasion to explain the real purpose of God in JESUS CHRIST. There is to come, finally, a time of universal restoration, "restitution of *all* things." He adds the significant words that God has promised this "by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began;" and,

therefore, we who teach this hope are but following in the steps of all God's holy prophets. Thus S. PETER would have us go to the Old Testament, and weave, as it were, its varied predictions into one concordant whole : gather its sacred promises till they, with one voice, proclaim the restitution of all things.

It is not my design minutely to consider the varied promises of blessing to all men contained in the Old Testament, though they can be traced almost everywhere. At the very moment of the Fall is given a promise, that the serpent's head shall be bruised, intimating a complete overthrow. Two points are very significant here. The promise is not of the serpent's wounding, but of his destruction ; and next the promise, so far reaching, is conveyed in close connection with a terrible judgment, it is part of the sentence, it is embedded, so to speak, in it. Further, with the promise to ABRAHAM was blended an intimation of blessing to the race of man, to all the families of the earth. And this intimation of a world-wide blessing, as has been often pointed out, grows more frequent as the stream of revelation flows on. We find that in the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets, are traces, clear and distinct, of universal blessing, of hope for all. Thus of the teaching of the Law a fundamental part rested on the institution of the 'first fruits,' and the 'first born.' Elsewhere in this volume has been pointed out the extreme significance of

this as bearing on the larger hope, and as fulfilled in JESUS CHRIST. For the 'first fruits' pledge the entire harvest ("if the first fruit be holy the lump is also holy"—*Rom.* xi. 16), and the 'first born' include the entire family, and not a part merely. But CHRIST is the 'first born,' and the 'first fruits,' and thus sums up in Himself, not a part of the race, but the entire race. In other words, CHRIST as the 'first born,' stands pledged to save every son of ADAM'S race; as the 'first fruits,' to save the entire harvest. So are His elect said to be "a kind of 'first fruits'" and the 'first born' ("Israel is my son, even my 'first born'"); and therefore in their salvation is a renewed pledge of the salvation of the entire human race, without any exception; thus, too, light falls on the true meaning of the Divine election as carrying with it a pledge of universal salvation.

Let us trace further this promise of the restitution of all things; for the Psalmists, too, are God's prophets, and are full of the largest and happiest forecasts. When they speak of the coming Messiah, they are at the farthest from claiming the blessings of His reign exclusively for themselves; on the contrary, they say, 'His name shall endure for ever: His name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in Him; *all* nations shall call Him blessed' . . "They constantly breathe forth the invitation, 'O praise the Lord *all* ye nations;

praise Him *all* ye people.' "—*Salv. Mundi.* Other examples of the same address to all nations —to all peoples—bidding them join in God's praise, and surely anticipating that they would one day do so, are frequent in the Psalms. Take, for example, those our Prayer Book has made familiar, *e.g.*, *Cantate Domino;* it is not alone the house of Israel that shares God's mercy and truth, but *all the ends of the world* are declared to have seen the salvation of our God —see *Is.* xi. 5—and so in the next verse *all* lands are bidden to shew themselves joyful unto the Lord. To the same effect is the familiar clause of the *Jubilate*, "O be joyful in the Lord all *ye* lands." To shew how deeply this idea is embedded in the *Psalter*, let me add a few more passages. "All nations shall do Him service." —*Ps.* lxxii. 11. "Unto Thee shall *all* flesh come."—*Ps.* lxv. 2. "Thou shalt inherit *all* the nations."—*Ps.* lxxxii. 8. "*All* nations shall come and worship Thee."—*Ps.* lxxxvi. 9. "*All* the earth shall worship Thee."—*Ps.* lxvi. 4. "Sing unto the Lord *all the whole earth.*"—*Ps.* xcvi. 1. "*All* the earth shall be filled with His Majesty."—*Ps.* lxxii. 19. "Let *all* flesh give thanks unto His holy name, for ever and ever." —*Ps.* cxlv. 21. "*All* the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee."—*Ps.* xxii. 27.* Compare, too, *Ps.* lxvi. 1;

*This text has a special significance on account of the close connection of this Psalm with the Atonement; as a result of which all the ends of the world shall turn, as it predicts, unto the Lord.

lxvii. 2-3 ; *c.* iii. 22, &c. Surely all this constitutes a remarkable array of evidence for the universality of CHRIST's kingdom. Can any fair mind accept the traditional creed as a satisfactory explanation of these passages? Would they be fairly met by saying that out of all the countless generations of man, some one generation only shall at length fully learn to know God ? It is impossible so to think ; impossible not to see here a foreshadowing of those times of 'restitution of *all things*'—which must come if the Bible speak truly. In this universal hope is to be found the true spirit of the Psalms, in these invitations addressed, not to Israel, but to all nations—nay, to whatsoever exists. In this spirit the Psalter closes, "Let everything that hath breath, praise the Lord."—*Ps.* cl. 6.

Of the greater prophets the same is true; though I need not speak in detail of them. From amid their varied contents, at times break forth promises of the widest, amplest hope ; anticipations of a time of universal bliss and joy; of a world in which all pain and sorrow shall have passed away. But these passages are in the main familiar to you, and I need hardly quote them. They have found their way to the heart of Christendom, and have stamped themselves on its literature. Take, however, only this one sentence from the evangelical prophet, and take it mainly because S. PAUL echoes it back, and interprets it as he echoes it. It is Jehovah

who speaks these words by the mouth of ISAIAH: 'Look unto Me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth: for I am God and there is none other: I have sworn by myself and the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow and every tongue confess.' Could any words more emphatically declare it to be the divine purpose that the *whole earth*, to the very end of it shall be saved; that every knee shall bend in homage before God, and every tongue take the oath of fealty to Him? Are we not expressly told that this declaration, since it has come from the righteous mouth of God, cannot return unto Him void, but must accomplish its object; that object being the salvation of the human race? S. PAUL echoes this great word in the epistle to the Philippians, and though on his lips it gains definiteness and precision, assuredly it loses no jot or tittle of its breadth: he affirms, *Phil.* ii. 9-11, 'That God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name, in order that at the name of JESUS every knee shall bow; not only every knee of man—for now the promise grows incalculably wider—but every knee in Heaven and on earth, and under the earth: and that every tongue shall confess that JESUS CHRIST is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.' It is hard to understand ISAIAH as proclaiming less than a universal redemption, but if S. PAUL did not mean to proclaim a

redemption as wide as the universe, what use or force is there in words ?"—*Salvator Mundi.*

On one passage I must briefly dwell. 'He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be *satisfied?*' Can words convey a plainer refutation of the traditional creed ? For that asks me to believe that CHRIST is satisfied, while His own children are given over to endless ruin. Who believes this of JESUS CHRIST? Who can believe Him 'satisfied' with the final and utter ruin of any one soul for whom He died ?—'satisfied' that His Cross should fail ?—'satisfied' with the victory of evil ?

And remember how full are the Prophets, and the Psalms no less, of pictures of the vastness of the divine mercy, of His tenderness that never fails. Even from amid the sadness of the *Lamentations*, we hear a voice assuring us that 'God will *not cast off for ever*, but though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies.'—*Lam.* iii. 31. Or take these words, 'I will not contend for ever, neither will I be *always wroth*, for the spirit should fail before me, or the souls which I have made.'—*Is.* lvii. 16. This idea is a favourite one; the contrast between the short duration of God's anger and the enduring *eternal character of His love.* 'So in a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with *everlasting* kindness will I have mercy on thee,

saith the Lord Thy Redeemer.'—*Is.* liv. 8. Let us pause here for a moment to dwell on the significance of this fact of the limited duration of the divine anger, so clearly taught in the Old Testament. Take a few instances, 'I am merciful, saith the Lord, I will not keep anger for ever.' —*Jer.* iii. 12. 'His anger endureth but a moment.'—*Ps.* xxx. 5. 'While His mercy endureth for ever.'—*Ps.* cxxxvi. 'He will not always chide, neither keepeth He His anger for ever.'—*Ps.* ciii. 9. 'He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy.'—*Mic.* vii. 18. But if this be true, *what becomes of the popular creed?* If God's anger is temporary, how can it be endless? If it endure but a moment, how can it last for ever in even a solitary instance?

We have spoken of the pictures of universal blessedness that are to be found in the greater prophets, "perhaps," says the author already quoted, "some of you may not be equally familiar with the fact that these same pictures are also to be found in the minor prophets;" (a fact very suggestive) that "every one of these brief poems, or collections of poems, has its tiny Apocalypse. And mark this point well, while each of the minor prophets sees the vision of a whole world redeemed to the love and service of righteousness, this vision of redemption is invariably accompanied by a *vision of judgment*"—(see the last chapter). At least, if not all, yet very many of the

minor Prophets do predict the coming of a time of universal redemption. So HOSEA xiii. 14, exclaims, "O death, I will be thy plagues. O grave, I will be thy destruction."—(See 1 *Cor.* xv. 55.) So JOEL ii. 28, tells of the spirit as being poured upon *all* flesh. HABUKKUK can look beyond the terrors of judgment and see the "*earth* filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the *waters cover the sea.*"—ch. ii. 14. Is not this wonderful? Can you not enter into S. PETER'S words as he stood forth, while yet Christianity was scarcely born, to proclaim as its glorious aim and scope, the universal restoration —the paradise of God regained for mankind—all things made new.—*Acts* iii. 21.

But I resume. In ZEPHANIAH we read the same glorious prospect, the same universal hope. He speaks of God's judgments as being terrible to the nations, in order that "men may worship Him, *every one* from his place, even *all the isles of the heathen.*"—ch. ii. 11. And again, in the same prophet, we are told how God is to send His fiery judgments to purify men, "that they may *all* call upon the name of the Lord to serve Him with one consent" (ch. iii. 8-9). So MALACHI closes the prophetic line with an intimation indeed of judgment—of a refining fire—but together with this, nay, in consequence of this, is the prospect unfolded, that from the "*rising of the sun unto the going down of the same*, God's name shall be great among the

Gentiles, and in *every* place incense and pure offerings shall be offered to Him."—ch. i. 11.

Brief as the above survey has been, it has, I trust, served to indicate how, even through all the Old Testament, the thread of *universal* hope runs: how the Prophets—Seers and Psalmists—of Israel did foreshadow a coming age; when sin should be no more, and sorrow and sighing should flee away for ever. To the New Testament I propose to devote an examination more in detail, as its great importance demands, in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHAT THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACHES.

"And here I may briefly say, that to my own mind, the language of the New Testament appears *unequivocally to affirm the redemption of all men;* their actual redemption from this evil and diseased state in which we now are; the actual raising up of all to a perfect life. To my mind this *universality* seems to be clearly expressed in Scripture." —HINTON, *The Mystery of Pain.*

We now turn to an examination of the very numerous passages in the New Testament which clearly declare, or imply, the salvation of all men: how numerous these are, how distinct their teaching, we shall see. One thing only I ask, which common fairness and honesty require, that our Lord and His Evangelists and Apostles may be understood to *mean what they say.* Thus, to take a few instances out of many: when they speak of all men I assume them to mean all men, and not some men; when they speak of all things I assume them to mean all things; when they speak of life and salvation as given to the world, I assume them to mean given, and not merely offered; when they speak of the destruction of death, of the Devil, of the works of the Devil, I assume them to mean that these shall be destroyed and not preserved for ever in hell; when they tell us that the whole of creation suffers but that it shall be delivered, I assume that they mean an actual deliverance of all created things; when they tell us that Redemption is

wider, broader, and stronger than the Fall, I assume that they mean to tell us at least this, that all the evil caused by the Fall shall be swept away; when they describe CHRIST'S empire as extending over all things and all creatures, and tell us that every tongue must join in homage to Him, I assume them to mean what their words convey in their ordinary sense; if I did not, should I not, in fact, be making God a liar?

Can a stranger fact be imagined than the persistent ignoring of the continuous teaching of the New Testament by the traditional creed? To bring this out clearly, I append the following chain of passages from a long series, clearly and closely linked together, claiming for CHRIST a saving empire co-extensive with the race, or (perhaps) rather with the whole universe. This connection is clearly marked, for each passage suggests, or contains, the same central idea; and thus forms a link in a continuous chain. This chain commences at creation, when all things were created by CHRIST, who, therefore, as S. PAUL implies, reconciles (in fact re-creates) *all* things unto God.—*Col.* i. 16-20. Hence His work is the restitution of *all* things—*Acts* iii. 21; He is Heir of *all* things—*Heb.* i. 2; in Him *all* nations are to be blessed—*Gal.* iii. 8; for the Father has given Him authority over *all* flesh to give to *whatsoever* was given to Him eternal life —*S. Jno.* xvii. 2 (see original); and so *all* flesh shall see the salvation of God—*S. Luke* iii. 6.

For God, whose counsel is immutable—*Heb.* vi. 17, will have *all* men to be saved—*1 Tim.* ii. 4 ; and *all* to come to repentance—*2 Pet.* iii. 9; and has shut *all* up unto unbelief, in order that He may shew mercy upon *all*—*Rom.* xi. 32; and has, therefore, put *all* things in subjection under CHRIST's feet.—*Eph.* i. 22. And so we are assured that God will gather into one *all* things in CHRIST—*Eph.* i. 10 ; and His grace comes upon *all* men unto justification of life—*Rom.* v. 18. So JESUS, knowing that the Father had given *all* things into His hands—*S. Jno.* xiii. 3, promises by His Cross to draw *all* men unto Himself.—*S. Jno.* xii. 32. For having, as stated, received *all* things from the Father—*S. Jno.* iii. 35, *all* that was given comes to Him; and He loses none—*S. Jno.* vi. 37-9; but if any stray, goes after that which is lost *till He find it*—*S. Luke* xv. 4 ; and so makes *all* things new.—*Rev.* xxi. 5. And thus He comes in order that *all* men may believe—*S. Jno.* i. 17—that the *world*, through Him, may be saved—*S. Jno.* iii. 17; His grace brings salvation to *all* men—*Tit.* ii. 11; for He takes away the sin of the *world*—*S. Jno.* i. 29; *gives* life to the *world*—*S. Jno.* vi. 33 ; and, because His gifts are without repentance (are irrevocable)—*Rom.* xi. 29; is the Light of the *world*—*S. Jno.* viii. 12 ; is the Propitiation for the sins of the *whole world*—*1 S. Jno.* ii. 2; is the Saviour of *all* men—*1 Tim.* iv. 10; *destroys* the works of the Devil, not some of them only—*1 Jno.* iii. 8 ; and the Devil

himself—*Heb.* ii. 14; *abolishes* death—*2 Tim.* i. 10; is manifested to put away sin—*Heb.* ix. 26; and thus subduing *all* things unto Himself—*Phil.* iii. 21; (this context clearly shews this subjugation to be *conformity* to Himself) does not forget the *dead*, but takes the Gospel to Hades—*1 Pet.* iii. 19; of which He holds the keys—*Rev.* i. 18; and the *dead* are evangelised —*1 Pet.* iv. 6; and death and Hades destroyed. —*Rev.* xx. 14. Thus *all* are made alive in Him —*1 Cor.* xv. 22; and there is no more curse— *Rev.* xxii. 2-3; but *every* knee of things in heaven and earth, and under the earth, bends to Him—*Phil.* iii. 10; for the *Creation* is delivered from the bondage of corruption—*Rom.* viii. 21; and *every creature* joins in the song of praise— *Rev.* v. 13; and so comes the END when He delivers up the Kingdom to God, who is then ALL IN ALL.—*1 Cor.* xv. 24-8. Thus to deny the absolute universality of CHRIST'S redeeming sway over ALL SOULS AND ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER, is no less than to withdraw from the New Testament its very kernel and essence. For here we are not dealing with some few passages, in which it might be possible to say that '*all*' was used in a lax sense; we have a connected series in which link follows link; a series in which the actual, not the potential, universality of CHRIST'S kingdom is the central and essential thought. Let us now consider, a little more in detail, the passages themselves.

"FOR THE SON OF MAN IS COME TO SAVE THAT WHICH WAS LOST." *S. Matt.* xviii. 11.—*St. Luke* xix. 10.

Here the question is simply this, will JESUS CHRIST really do what He has come to do? or will He *fail?*—as the traditional creed in spite of all denials indubitably teaches. Will He save *that which was lost* and not *some of the lost merely, a totally different thing?* How can "the lost" be saved, if countless myriads, as the popular creed teaches, shall be finally lost? nay, if any are finally lost, surely "that which was lost" is not saved.

"THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE UNTO LEAVEN WHICH A WOMAN TOOK AND HID IN THREE MEASURES OF MEAL TILL THE WHOLE WAS LEAVENED." *S. Matt.* xiii. 33; *S. Luke* xiii. 20-1.

Here is a passage which seems to teach a universal salvation. The Kingdom of Heaven is set on this earth as leaven in meal; and as the leaven works till the whole mass is leavened, so the Kingdom of Heaven is destined to leaven the whole earth, *i.e.*, to save all men. You cannot limit the "meal" of the parable in any way; it is the whole world that CHRIST claims as His Kingdom; of the world He is the Light, the Life, the Saviour. All things are His and all souls, and all that CHRIST claims—"*the whole*"—shall one day be leavened.

"ALL FLESH SHALL SEE THE SALVATION OF GOD." *S. Luke* iii. 5.

Quoted from ISAIAH; he says, speaking of redemption, ch. xl., "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be

made low, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." Can you fairly reconcile these words with a partial salvation? Thus when the prophet says in the same chapter, verse 6, "all flesh is grass," who doubts the universality of his words; and if so, is it not a violation of all fairness in an exactly parallel case, to doubt the universality of the salvation?

"LOVE YOUR ENEMIES, DO GOOD TO THEM WHICH HATE YOU . . AND YE SHALL BE THE CHILDREN OF THE HIGHEST." *S. Luke* vi. 27-35; *S. Matt.* v. 44.

Note carefully the teaching of the whole passage. Shall God command us to love our enemies when He prepares an endless Hell for His own enemies? Shall God command us to bless and do good to those who hate us, when He means for ever to curse and do evil to those who hate Him? Does God, then, expect us to act on higher motives than He will Himself act?

"BUT WHEN A STRONGER THAN HE SHALL COME UPON HIM AND OVERCOME HIM, HE TAKETH FROM HIM ALL HIS ARMOUR, WHEREIN HE TRUSTED AND DIVIDETH HIS SPOILS." *S. Matt.* xii. 29, *S. Luke* xi. 22.

Here it is asserted *(a)* that CHRIST is stronger than Satan, *(b)* that CHRIST will overcome Satan, *(c)* will take from him all his armour, *(d)* will divide, *i.e.*, take away his spoils. Each of these statements contradicts the popular creed, for that teaches *(a)* that evil is stronger than good, *(b)* that it overcomes good in numberless cases, *(c)* that Satan's power for evil is not taken away,

but lasts practically for ever, *(d)* that his spoils —the souls he has captured—are not divided, *i.e.*, taken from him.

"WHAT MAN OF YOU HAVING AN HUNDRED SHEEP . . IF HE LOSE ONE OF THEM DOTH NOT LEAVE THE NINETY AND NINE . . AND GO AFTER THAT WHICH IS LOST UNTIL HE FIND IT?" *S. Luke* xv. 4.

Antient commentators follow two main lines, (i.) the hundred sheep are all men; (ii.) are all spiritual creatures: in the former case the wicked are the strayed sheep: in the latter mankind itself by the Fall. Both views seem to involve universalism. In the one all the wicked, in the other all humanity, are sought till they are found. And let us note how broadly CHRIST bases His argument, "what man of you," He asks, "would not do this?" As though to assure us that in the common feeling of humanity, shared by even publicans and sinners, we have safe warrant to conclude that our Father will seek on and on till He find *every* erring child. Lastly, note how the straying sheep is represented as being the shepherd's loss. When man strays God is the loser; and God in seeking man is trying to retrieve His own loss.

"WHAT WOMAN HAVING TEN PIECES OF SILVER, IF SHE LOSE ONE PIECE, DOTH NOT LIGHT A CANDLE AND . . SEEK DILIGENTLY TILL SHE FIND IT?" *S. Luke* xv. 8.

Here is precisely the same broad human basis, and the same idea, the sense of loss is that of the owner, *i.e.*, God. Keep steadily in view three

facts, which distinctly emerge from these parables: 1—our own feelings of love and pity are a safe guide to God's feeling; "what man of you?" 2—every lost soul is God's loss, who therefore may be trusted to seek its recovery; and 3—to seek *till He find it.*

"FOR THE SON OF MAN IS COME TO SEEK AND TO SAVE THAT WHICH WAS LOST." *S. Luke* xix. 10.

If so, I gather from His own parables, and His essential nature, that so long as *anything is lost*, JESUS CHRIST will go on seeking and saving; for is He not always the same? "The lost" are His charge, and not some of the lost, a very different thing, as I have before said. Shall any thing separate any lost one from His love? Is He not Lord of the dead as truly as of the living? Did He not go from the bitter Cross to the lost spirits in prison, to preach, as S. PETER tells us, the Gospel to *the dead?*

"THE SAME CAME . . THAT ALL MEN THROUGH HIM MIGHT BELIEVE." *S. John* i. 7.

Yes, that *all* men might believe, that is indeed the Divine purpose—the purpose of Him who sent the Baptist. But who is there that shall say, that what God purposes to do He will fail to accomplish? I know that He cannot fail: I read distinctly of the *immutability* of His counsel (*Heb.* vi. 17.) Am I to believe that the immutable purpose of the unchanging God shall come to nothing?

"BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD, WHICH TAKETH AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD." *S. John* i. 29.

How could the extent of the work of CHRIST be more distinctly intimated? It is the world's sin, and not less, that he takes away. But, if it is *taken away*, how can there be an endless hell for its punishment? Is all this merely playing with words? Do we dare to assert of CHRIST, 'Behold the Lamb of God who tries to take away the sin of the world, but cannot succeed?'

"FOR GOD SENT NOT HIS SON INTO THE WORLD TO CONDEMN THE WORLD; BUT THAT THE WORLD THROUGH HIM MIGHT BE SAVED." *S. John* iii. 17.

Again, the same plain statement, as to the *world's* salvation and God's purpose to save it; and again I ask, are we to believe God when He tells us that His purpose in Redemption is the salvation of the world; and assures us by His prophets that His word shall not return unto Him void, but shall accomplish that which He pleases?

"THE FATHER LOVETH THE SON, AND HATH GIVEN ALL THINGS INTO HIS HAND." *S. John* iii. 35.

The relevance of this is obvious, for "*all* that which the Father giveth me," says CHRIST, "shall come unto me," ch. vi. 37. This is one of the large group of passages showing the universality of CHRIST's kingdom; compare ch. xiii. 3, and see the suggestive connection of the gift of all things to CHRIST and His atoning death. Also see *S. Matt.* xi. 27, where, just before the well-known appeal "come unto me," JESUS has been

saying that *all things* were delivered unto Him by His Father ; a connection surely suggestive. Read, too, in this light, *S. Matt.* xxviii. 18, and note the connection between all power claimed by CHRIST, and His claim to bring all nations to discipleship. So, too, *Heb.* ii. 8-9, in this last passage again the connection between the gift of all things to JESUS CHRIST, and His Atonement is very marked—His tasting death for *every* man. The Divine Son is set over all things ; as He creates *all* things (actually) so He redeems and restores *all* things (actually, not potentially) ; His relation is to all, not a part ; God has given to Him all things ; and all things given to Him shall come to Him.

"THE CHRIST, THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD."
S. John iv. 42.

CHRIST is the Saviour of the *world.* In saying God is the creator of the world, an actual creation is meant ; so in saying CHRIST is the Saviour of the world, not anything less than an actual salvation is meant ; a point I must be forgiven for pressing, so true is it and so generally forgotten.

"GATHER UP THE FRAGMENTS THAT REMAIN, THAT NOTHING BE LOST." *S. John* vi. 12.

In passing we may note this passage, for CHRIST's *hints* go very far, and are full of meaning. What is the larger hope but this, that of all that the Father hath given Him He will lose nothing, but will gather up every fragment ? Shall CHRIST shrink from losing a crumb of

bread, and be *satisfied—Is.* liii. 11, to lose even a solitary human spirit for whom He died ?

"HE WHICH . . GIVETH LIFE UNTO THE WORLD."
S. John vi. 33.

Here we are told that life is given, not offered merely, to the world. The world *(Kosmos)* is in Scripture the ungodly mass, the outer circle. It is contrasted with the inner circle of the faithful, the elect. But this world is over and over again claimed by CHRIST. He saves it ; He gives life to it ; He gives light to it. Remember to "offer" is not the same as to "give."

"ALL THAT THE FATHER GIVETH ME SHALL COME TO ME; . . AND THIS IS THE FATHER'S WILL THAT OF ALL WHICH HE HATH GIVEN ME I SHOULD LOSE NOTHING."
S. John vi. 37-9.

This is very explicit ; we have seen that God the Father has given to CHRIST, not some things, but *all* things ; and here we have the word and promise of JESUS CHRIST that *all* that has been given to Him shall come to Him, and that nothing shall be lost (ch. vi. 12). What further is needed to prove from Scripture a universal salvation ? What more could God possibly say ?

"MY FLESH, WHICH I WILL GIVE FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD."
S. John vi. 51.

Again, it is the *world* for whose life CHRIST is to give His flesh. Can He give in vain ? His gifts are "without repentance," *i.e.*, must be effectual. To say that His word can return to Him having failed, or His gifts not take effect, is to contradict Holy Scripture.

"THEN SPAKE JESUS . . I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD." *S. John* viii. 12.

Here, too, the *world*, the ungodly world, is that of which CHRIST is the Light as well as the Life.

"AND I, IF I BE LIFTED UP FROM THE EARTH, WILL DRAW ALL MEN UNTO ME." *S. John* xii. 32.

I think the plainest comment the best here. A partial drawing, *i.e.*, a partial salvation makes His words *untrue*. One reads the comments of good men on this passage, with a feeling akin to despair, as they attempt to make JESUS CHRIST say that which He did not say, and not say that which He did say. What He does say is exactly given in the following lines :—

So shall I lift up in my pierced hands *
Beyond the reach of grief and guilt * *
The whole creation.—E. B. Browning.

"FOR I CAME NOT TO JUDGE THE WORLD, BUT TO SAVE THE WORLD." *S. John* xii. 47.

This is as distinct as possible ; its force can only be evaded by asserting that CHRIST will fail to accomplish that very thing which He came to do : and this assertion must be made in the teeth of those repeated and explicit passages which declare the completeness of His triumph.

"JESUS KNOWING THAT THE FATHER HAD GIVEN ALL THINGS INTO HIS HANDS." *S. John* xiii. 3.

These words carry us to the very eve of the Passion. 'Knowing that His hour was come,' v. 1, JESUS knows, too, that all things have been given into His hands (See ch. iii. 35). Such knowledge at such an hour is deeply significant.

As the Cross draws near, there comes to cheer Him the knowledge that to Him have been given all things, *i.e.*, an assurance of absolute victory. Therefore, because all are His, His Cross not merely will, but must draw all.

"AS THOU GAVEST HIM AUTHORITY OVER ALL FLESH, THAT WHATSOEVER THOU HAST GIVEN HIM, TO THEM HE SHOULD GIVE ETERNAL LIFE." *S. John* xvii. 2.

The revised version, though an improvement, yet fails to bring out with clearness the central fact, that eternal life has been given to all flesh by CHRIST. Literally the original runs: "Thou gavest to Him authority over *all* flesh, in order that ALL which thou hast given to Him, to them (*i.e.*, to all), He should give eternal life." The Greek is clear, and our versions fail in repeating the emphatic *all* (repeated in the original), which involves the gift (not the offer) of eternal life to all by CHRIST—thus wholly obscuring the meaning.

"AND HE IS THE PROPITIATION FOR OUR SINS; AND NOT FOR OURS ONLY, BUT ALSO FOR THE SINS OF THE WHOLE WORLD." 1 *John* ii. 2.

Notice here the world contrasted with the true disciples; and yet the propitiation is not to be confined to the few, it is for all. S. JOHN'S anxiety is to *assert this for all.* Here, as so often, the narrower and wider purposes of salvation are both mentioned: the narrower not excluding, as in the popular view, but *including* and *implying* the wider; a truth of the deepest importance.

"THE SON OF GOD WAS MANIFESTED THAT HE MIGHT DESTROY THE WORKS OF THE DEVIL." 1 *John* iii. 8.

Who can read with impartial mind this explicit statement, and doubt its meaning? The very purpose of the manifestation of God's Son is the sweeping away of Satan's works. How then can this *possibly be true*, while pain and sin and hell endure for ever and ever? No ideas can be more exactly opposed than the permanence of evil, and yet the destruction of the works of the Devil. Is sin the Devil's work? Is all that sin involves the work of the Devil? Yes, or No? You cannot answer in the negative. But if the affirmative be true, then all is to be swept away; hell and sin and sorrow.

"THE FATHER SENT THE SON TO BE THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD." 1 *John* iv. 14.

Does it not savour of mockery to say that the Father sent the Son to destroy evil and to save the world, and yet that neither shall evil be destroyed or the world saved. And remember, I am only pleading for CHRIST's doing the very thing He has come to do, and promised to do.

"I HAVE THE KEYS OF HELL AND DEATH." *Rev.* i. 18.

Significant, surely! Doubly significant when we remember that CHRIST had just *used these keys to open the prison doors* in His descent into Hades. How, if so, can death (the second or any death) sever from JESUS CHRIST *(who holds the keys)*—from His power to save?

"AND EVERY CREATURE WHICH IS IN HEAVEN, AND ON THE EARTH, AND UNDER THE EARTH, . . HEARD I SAYING UNTO HIM THAT SITTETH ON THE THRONE, AND UNTO THE LAMB, BLESSINGS," &c. *Rev.* v. 13.

How comprehensive this picture. Its words embrace every created thing—on the earth, and under the earth, and in the sea. All are represented as swelling the chorus of praise to God, and to the Lamb. Yes, to such an end we trust and hope that all creation is indeed coming, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men; and because we believe His own words, that promise that all things shall be made new. How else could *all things* join in this glorious chorus?

"DEATH AND HELL WERE CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE." *Rev.* xx. 14.

"The sense of the whole seems to be that at the final consummation of all things, all evil, physical and moral, will be abolished."—Bishop WARBURTON.

"BEHOLD I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW." *Rev.* xxi. 5.

This is the same glorious hope, not for some, but for *all;* no less than *all things* are to be made new. Here, again, we have a universal restoration distinctly promised—the salvation of all.

"AND THE LEAVES OF THE TREE WERE FOR THE HEALING OF THE NATIONS. AND THERE SHALL BE NO MORE CURSE." *Rev.* xxii. 2-3.

Here is a striking hint—after the manner of Holy Scripture—as to a future work of restor-

ation ; a hint that the nations are one day to be healed; that in another age there shall be ministries of salvation ; for all this is subsequent to the passing away of the present earth, and the present heaven (ch. xxi. 1). And as a result of this healing, there shall be no more curse—no pain—no tears—and no endless hell therefore, but *all things* made new.

"I WILL POUR OUT OF MY SPIRIT UPON ALL FLESH."
Acts ii. 17.

This, and *no less*, is over and over again declared to be the scope and extent of CHRIST'S Redemption. Compare these words, too, with the passages following, in one and all of which S. PETER emphatically states the *universality* of CHRIST'S work of salvation ; it is to turn "every one of them from his iniquities ;" nay, it is to culminate in a time of renewal of all things, as our next citation shall shew.

"THE TIMES OF RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS."
Acts iii. 21.

All things are to be restored; (Apokatastasis, i.e., complete restoration), and this is said to be the meaning of the work of CHRIST, the meaning of the promise to ABRAHAM, of the Jewish covenant (v. 25, and c. ii. 17), the meaning of the outpoured Spirit. This God hath spoken by all "the prophets since the world began." I repeat, either these words of the Apostle are untrue, or there shall one day be a universal restoration—*all* things made new—*all* men saved.

"AND HAVE HOPE THAT THERE SHALL BE A RESURRECTION . . BOTH OF THE JUST AND THE UNJUST." *Acts* xxiv. 15.

Note these words. Could S. PAUL have hoped for a resurrection of the *unjust* if that meant hopeless punishment to them? "Who is *so great a fool*," asks a famous Father, "as to think so great a boon as the resurrection can be to those that rise an occasion OF endless torment?" An interesting subject opens out here, on which see Chapter VI.—on Resurrection.

We have seen how very numerous are the passages which the writings of *S. Matthew*, *S. Luke* and *S. John* contain, clearly asserting the salvation of all men, or implying it by necessary inference. Let us now proceed to consider the many and weighty declarations, to the same effect, furnished by the epistles of *S. Paul*, *S. Peter*, and that to the *Hebrews*. I may here say, that we shall find in these books the stream of promise still widening—the blessed purpose of Redemption as universal in its effects—indicated with a precision of language, and a variety of illustration, convincing to any fair mind.

"THE PROMISE THAT HE SHOULD BE THE HEIR OF THE WORLD . . TO ABRAHAM." *Rom.* iv. 13.

Here remark how distinct is the assertion—that in the promise to ABRAHAM is implied a universal blessing. The election by God of the Jews really involves *the world's* salvation; for

ABRAHAM is "heir of the world," *i.e.*, receives as his inheritance the *whole* world. In a former chapter (ch. vi.) I have discussed at more length this all important fact, that the essential idea involved in the divine election, is by it to convey a blessing to *all;* not to offer, but actually to impart this blessing.

"THEREFORE AS BY THE OFFENCE OF ONE, JUDGMENT CAME UPON ALL MEN TO CONDEMNATION; EVEN SO BY THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF ONE THE FREE GIFT CAME UPON ALL MEN UNTO JUSTIFICATION OF LIFE." *Rom.* v. 16-8.

I cannot but earnestly commend a study of these verses, and with them, of the whole drift and argument of the passage. It is, I do not fear to assert, *absolutely irreconcilable* with a partial salvation. It contains a statement as explicit as words can convey it, of this great truth—God's remedy is stronger than sin. Wherever, upon whomsoever sin has lighted, there shall God's grace, through JESUS CHRIST, come to heal. In the very same sense as "the many" (all men) were made sinners, so the "many" shall have righteousness—not merely offered them—but be made righteous. Less than this cannot satisfy the original text, about the meaning of which there is no question at all. Will the advocates of the popular creed explain how the grace of God (v. 15) can be *mightier*, in fact, than the Fall, if there be a Hell ringing to all eternity with the groans of the lost? Will they explain how grace can *much more* abound than the offence—if there be a place of endless torture to

punish the offence—if the offence be never taken away?

"BECAUSE THE CREATURE ITSELF ALSO SHALL BE DELIVERED FROM THE BONDAGE OF CORRUPTION INTO THE GLORIOUS LIBERTY OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD. FOR WE KNOW THAT THE WHOLE CREATION GROANETH AND TRAVAILETH IN PAIN TOGETHER UNTIL NOW. . . WAITING FOR THE ADOPTION, TO WIT, THE REDEMPTION OF OUR BODY."
Rom. viii. 21-22-23.

Here is a glorious passage in which the larger hope is not dimly, but explicitly taught—taught with absolute clearness. As to the details of S. PAUL's meaning, men may fairly differ; but his central thought is clear. All created things have been subjected to vanity—to pain and suffering. Yet these are but the travail pains of a new birth; all that suffers shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption. Note how here (alone in the New Testament I think) are the sufferings of the whole creation alluded to, and how emphatic is the assertion that *every created thing—pasa he ktisis*—is awaiting Redemption; and this reaches them by the manifestation of the Sons of God, 'the first fruits.'

"FOR IF THE CASTING AWAY OF THEM BE THE RECONCILING OF THE WORLD, WHAT SHALL THE RECEIVING OF THEM BE, BUT LIFE FROM THE DEAD? FOR IF THE FIRST FRUITS BE HOLY, THE LUMP IS ALSO HOLY." *Rom.* xi. 15-16.

Here are neglected truths plainly stated. The calling of the Jews is linked in God's plan with the world's salvation (v. 12). They are His people, in the truly divine sense, that by them the world's salvation may be worked out. They, as 'first fruits,' represent and pledge the world

—this is the true election and this only—and JESUS CHRIST has, by His Cross, made of Jew and Gentile "one new man"—suggestive words. ABRAHAM is thus made, in Scripture phrase, the "heir of the world." But it is precisely this breadth of the divine purpose that the Bible is so anxious to enforce, and the popular creed so anxious to deny.

"AND SO ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED." *Rom.* xi. 26.

Not one soul therefore lost finally; not a Dives—not a Judas—if *all* shall be saved. The context—v. 7 (and ch. x. 21)—very clearly distinguishes 'Israel' from the 'election' (taken out of Israel), and shews that by Israel the whole nation is here meant. True, again, it is, that, in a wider sense, Israel itself (all Israel) forms the elect people; and no less true that God's election is ever made with a design to reach and bless the world; and, therefore, in Israel "all the families of the earth shall be blessed." To sum up—(*a*). God's rejection of Israel is apparent only, for His calling is indefeasible, and therefore (*b*) *all* Israel shall be saved—without exception. (*c*). Israel, *i.e.*, the elect, is so closely linked with the world, that their very rejection means the world's salvation—in God's mysterious plan. (*d*). So close is this tie between the elect and the world, that a further promise follows, that Israel's restoration shall be to the world "life *from the dead*"—v. 15—in itself a very suggestive phrase as to God's way of giving life—see ch. vi., on Death.

"FOR THE GIFTS AND CALLING OF GOD ARE WITHOUT REPENTANCE." *Rom.* xi. 29.

That is, what God gives, He gives effectually. His gifts are IRREVOCABLE. When He calls, men *must hear*—a fact of the deepest significance, nay, decisive of this question. Let me ask the advocates of the popular creed, how, if God's call to mankind *must be obeyed*, sooner or later, there is any room for endless disobedience in hell ?

"GOD HATH CONCLUDED THEM ALL IN UNBELIEF, THAT HE MIGHT HAVE MERCY UPON ALL." *Rom.* xi. 32.

Words that surely need no comment. The original is the widest possible ; it is the whole mass of men to whom S. PAUL refers. *The whole* is shut up unto unbelief in order that *the whole* may find mercy.

"FOR OF HIM AND THROUGH HIM AND UNTO HIM ARE ALL THINGS." *Rom.* xi. 36.

But if so, God is the END of all things, *i.e.*, unto Him all things must return (as indeed many of the Antients argued—pp. 121, 180-5).

"AS I LIVE, SAITH THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL CONFESS TO GOD. SO THEN EVERY ONE OF US SHALL GIVE ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF TO GOD." *Rom.* xiv. 11-12.

S. PAUL here quotes the great passage—*Is.* xlv. 23, in which *salvation* is promised to the entire human race in *connection with the Judgment* —see pp. 226-7, where this is shewn). From the whole context it is clear that CHRIST's empire over *all* is absolute ; extends to the dead ; implies salvation ; and this salvation is linked with his (future) judgment.

"AS IN ADAM ALL DIE, EVEN SO IN CHRIST SHALL ALL BE MADE ALIVE." 1 *Cor.* xv. 22.

As ADAM actually brought death, spiritually, to all, so the second ADAM actually gives life, spiritually, to all. No mere offer of life can for a moment satisfy the plain language of the text. Nothing less than life really—spiritually imparted to all by the second ADAM—can fairly express S. PAUL'S meaning. If it is said, that as death in ADAM is not final in some cases, so life in CHRIST is not final in some cases, I reply (i.) at least the plain words of the text require an *actual communication of life* TO ALL through CHRIST, else the comparison between ADAM and CHRIST is NOT TRUE; for it is certain that the link between ADAM and the race is absolute, actual, and universal. And to call CHRIST the second ADAM, while denying a tie equally actual, absolute, and universal, is to dupe men. (ii.) The context involves the permanence of this life through CHRIST, for it claims for CHRIST a full victory; and requires us to believe that God will be All in All.

"FOR HE MUST REIGN, TILL HE HATH PUT ALL ENEMIES UNDER HIS FEET. . . THAT GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL." 1 *Cor.* xv. 25–28.

There is here, *at the End*, no place for sin—no trace of evil—no hell—for is not God *All and in All?* His empire is to be unbroken, universal, absolute. And the submission of all to Him is the same submission by which He is to be subject to the Father, *i.e.*, harmony and love, and peace; so the context requires.

"O DEATH, WHERE IS THY STING? O GRAVE, WHERE IS THY VICTORY? 1 *Cor.* xv. 55.

Fitly do these words close this chapter, with a prospect of *universal* victory over every opposing power. I ask my readers quietly to think over the whole drift of this chapter; to mark the Apostle's increasing rapture, as his argument expands, and as the prospect opens before him of a universe yet to be, from which every form of evil is banished. Let them consider these two thoughts, ever present to the Apostle's mind here: the *oneness* of mankind in CHRIST, and the *certainty* and *universality* of CHRIST'S victory; let them, with S. PAUL, look on in thought to the End, when God shall be All in All; then let them say if the salvation of all men be not taught in Holy Scripture.

"GOD WAS IN CHRIST, RECONCILING THE WORLD UNTO HIMSELF." 2 *Cor.* v. 19.

Here is once more stated the extent of CHRIST'S work, it is the world reconciled, and no less than the world. The question is, by what right do we limit its efficacy, when God assures us that His gifts and calling are without repentance, and His purpose immutable? Is God in earnest? Does *He mean what He says?* I speak with reverence. This is a question that must surely often rise unbidden, as we read these statements of the Bible, and compare them with the popular creed, which so often turns "all" into "some," when salvation is promised to "all," and turns the "world," when that is said to be saved, into a mere fraction of men.

"IN THEE SHALL ALL NATIONS BE BLESSED."
Gal. iii. 8.

The force of texts like this lies in the fact that they shew the true meaning of God's election, and that they are links in that great chain of promise—of blessing to *all* men—which S. PETER assures us God spake by the mouth of all His holy prophets, and which he declares to mean the restitution of all things.

"THAT . . HE MIGHT GATHER TOGETHER IN ONE ALL THINGS IN CHRIST, BOTH WHICH ARE IN HEAVEN AND WHICH ARE ON EARTH." *Eph.* i. 10.

Could the writer of those words have possibly believed in a hell swallowing up its myriads of victims? What can convey the idea of a future, in which all things—all the universe—shall be brought to CHRIST, if this passage does not convey it? But if the universe and its contents are summed up in CHRIST, where is any possibility of an endless hell, or of a Creation permanently divided ?

"GOD HATH PUT ALL THINGS UNDER HIS FEET."
Eph. i. 22.

Yes, to JESUS CHRIST *all* are to be brought—all things are to bend to Him. How can you—forgive my repeating the question—find place for *endless evil* in a universe in which *everything* is to be summed up in JESUS CHRIST ; in which *every* knee is to bend to Him, and to Him *every* tongue to confess ?

"THE CHURCH WHICH IS HIS BODY, THE FULNESS OF HIM WHICH FILLETH ALL IN ALL." *Eph.* i. 23.

"The Church," says S. JEROME, "may be understood as that composed not only of human beings, but of angels, and of the whole body of rational creatures,"—suggestive words.

"THAT IN THE AGES TO COME HE MIGHT SHEW THE EXCEEDING RICHES OF HIS GRACE." *Eph.* ii. 7.

On this S. JEROME says—"The extent of this grace is shewn by the fact that in the ages to come that grace will be extended to the "whole number of rational creatures," including evil spirits, as he goes on to state expressly.

"THAT THE GENTILES SHOULD BE FELLOW HEIRS." *Eph.* iii. 6.

Fellow heirs with the Jews. But the promise to the Jews was that *all* Israel should be saved. Hence to share this promise is to share a salvation equally universal in the case of the Gentiles. Because Jew and Gentile are made *one*.—*Eph.* ii. 14,—therefore all Gentiles are included in the promise to all Israel.

"HE ASCENDED UP FAR ABOVE ALL HEAVENS, THAT HE MIGHT FILL ALL THINGS." *Eph.* iv. 10.

But if CHRIST is to fill all things—the universe—how can evil subsist eternally?

"FROM WHOM THE WHOLE BODY FITLY JOINED TOGETHER . . MAKETH INCREASE." *Eph.* iv. 16.

Very striking is S. JEROME'S comment here. "The whole number of rational beings," he says,

"may be compared to a single body, now torn asunder by sin, but in the restoration of all things, CHRIST, like some wonder-working physician, shall come and restore to its proper place every part—the fallen angels to their former station, and man to Paradise once more."

"WHO IS THE FIRST-BORN OF EVERY CREATURE: AND BY HIM TO RECONCILE ALL THINGS UNTO HIMSELF; BY HIM, I SAY, WHETHER THEY BE THINGS* IN EARTH, OR THINGS IN HEAVEN." *Col.* i. 15-19-20.

I ask you carefully to read and consider this passage, and say, if it does not contain a clear statement that CHRIST is the "first born" of all creation, and thus sums up in Himself all, not the elect or holy, but mankind, whose *solidarity is thus affirmed?* I ask you further, in all calmness, to weigh the words in which S. PAUL traces this prerogative of JESUS CHRIST through Creation up to Redemption; to take in their simple grandeur the words, which tell how He on and by the Cross reconciled all things unto Himself, whether on earth or in heaven. The original is emphatic and striking. Note that CHRIST reconciles, *i.e.*, creates anew all that He created at first, *i e.*, *all things absolutely.* He carries on in Redemption the work of Creation. There is an evasion of the very essence of the passage, in teaching that by extinguishing, or sending to hell, all evil creatures, all things are reconciled to

*Observe here, as elsewhere, S. PAUL seems to provide against a possible or a probable doubt as to the extent of this reconciliation, by repeating his assertion and emphasising it.

God. For what S. PAUL asserts is that Reconciliation and Creation are parallel. To call the perdition of the sinner his reconciliation is mere folly. There passes, in fact, over all things everywhere, what is virtually one process, and one only, *i.e.*, Creation and Re-creation, *i.e.*, Reconciliation. As LIGHTFOOT says: "It was God's purpose to effect peace and harmony through the blood of the Cross, and so to restore all things whatsoever and wheresoever they be."

"THAT IN THE NAME OF JESUS EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW, OF THINGS IN HEAVEN, AND THINGS IN EARTH, AND THINGS UNDER THE EARTH; AND THAT EVERY TONGUE SHOULD CONFESS THAT JESUS CHRIST IS LORD." *Phil.* ii. 10-11.

This is S. PAUL'S statement of the great vision of the *Apocalypse* (*Rev.* v. 13), in which every created thing in heaven and on earth and under the earth unites to sing—blessing, etc., to God most high. Could a picture more universal be painted—*every* knee, in heaven, on earth, under the earth? "So it is," says S. JEROME, refering to this passage, "that the Cross of the Lord has helped not man alone, but angels, and that *every created being has been cleansed by the blood of its Lord.*"—In *Eph.* ii. 14. "All things," says LIGHTFOOT, "whatsoever and wheresoever they be . . . The whole universe, whether animate or inanimate, bends the knee in homage and raises its voice *in praise.*"

"ABLE EVEN TO SUBDUE ALL THINGS UNTO HIMSELF." *Phil.* iii. 21.

In what sense this subjugation of all things to

CHRIST is to be understood, is clear from the context, "who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be *conformed* to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." Note the significance of this. No one can doubt that CHRIST is destined to subdue all things, but this passage shows *decisively* that CHRIST'S subduing all things (in the Scriptural sense) is *making them like unto Himself.*—See note on 1 *Cor.* xv. 25. "In saying that every knee, &c., &c., shall bend to JESUS, the Apostle clearly teaches the harmony of the entire universe with what is good."—S. GREGORY, *De an. et. res.*

"GOD OUR SAVIOUR, WHO WILL HAVE ALL MEN TO BE SAVED, FOR THERE IS ONE GOD." 1 *Tim.* ii. 3-4.

"None can hinder His doing as He wills . . Now His will is that *all* should be saved. . . But because none is saved against his own will, God wills us to have a good will that so His counsel may take effect."—S. JEROME on *Eph.* i. 2. Further, S. PAUL rests on the essential unity of God—the One God can have but one eternal irresistible purpose. "God is One, the One that is All, that binds up all in one, and one in all, and makes all one."—J. WHITE, *Restoration of all things.* This Divine oneness is no merely arithmetical proposition. It states a deep spiritual fact, viz., that *Oneness* is of the essence of the divine plan. A Creator who is ONE, and a Creation perpetually TWO (*i.e.*, perpetually

divided into two classes), is to S. PAUL a thing inconceivable.

"GOD THE SAVIOUR OF ALL MEN, SPECIALLY OF THOSE THAT BELIEVE." 1 *Tim.* iv. 10.

Any possible obscurity in this passage becomes clear the moment we reflect on God's plan by which the elect—those who believe—are first saved, and then become the means, here or in the ages yet to come, of saving all men ; as will be more fully explained in a subsequent chapter. Note the clear statement that God is (actually) the Saviour of all men. In saying God is the Creator of all men, no one doubts that a universal creation is meant ; so in saying God is the Saviour of all men, a universal salvation is assuredly meant.

"OUR SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, WHO HATH ABOLISHED DEATH." 2 *Tim.* i. 10.

Death is *abolished*, and with death that which it in Scripture implies, sin and evil. For death abolished and hell maintained for ever are plain contradictions. Here we may very well ask those who maintain the doctrine of conditional immortality, how death can be abolished and yet swallow up finally all sinners in a sentence of annihilation—(a plain absurdity).

"FOR THE GRACE OF GOD HATH APPEARED, BRINGING SALVATION TO ALL MEN." *Titus* ii. 11.

Yes, bringing to all men salvation : this is precisely the larger hope. But how is "salvation

brought to all men" consistent with the damnation of myriads of men—nay, of any man? if, as we are distinctly told, God's gifts are without repentance, *i.e.*, effective.

"HE ALSO WENT AND PREACHED UNTO THE SPIRITS IN PRISON." 1 *Peter* iii. 19.

If we believe these words of the Apostle, they amount to a complete overthrow of the popular view of the state of the sinful dead; for plainly these words do shew a process of redemption as *going on after death*, which the popular creed flatly denies. Remark, too, who they were to whom CHRIST preached: they were not those who previously had no chance of salvation, but they seem to have been those who had sinned against the greatest light known in their day; they were those who had been disobedient in the days of NOAH. Yet it was to these men that JESUS went with His offer of salvation, *after their earthly training was over, after they had been shut up 'in prison.'*

"THE GOSPEL WAS PREACHED EVEN TO THE DEAD, THAT THEY MIGHT BE JUDGED, . . BUT LIVE IN THE SPIRIT." 1 *Peter* iv. 6.

Words these, surely full of hope. Notice again here *the connection between judgment and salvation*—(see v. 5.) S. PETER in this reference to the preaching of the gospel to the *dead*, must have—as just remarked—intended a lesson to the Christians of his day, and of our day; must have meant a hint as to what God's plan of

mercy in the full extent is, else the reference could hardly have been made. Here we see sinners *dead* and *judged*, and yet, in very deed, *evangelised—saved—alive* to God in the spirit.

"THE LORD IS . . NOT WILLING THAT ANY SHOULD PERISH, BUT THAT ALL SHOULD COME TO REPENTANCE." *2 Peter* iii. 9.

If then any do perish, God's will and design must have been successfully resisted ; a thing absurd, for both are immutable.

"HIS SON, WHOM HE HATH APPOINTED HEIR OF ALL THINGS." *Heb.* i. 2.

The heritage of CHRIST extends everywhere, for all things have been given to him. Now it is impossible to think of it as a *sham* heritage : for if CHRIST does not *in fact* (to use a homely phrase) come in for *all* things, he never receives his promised portion.

"THOU HAST PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET," ETC. *Heb.* ii. 8-9.

This is to be compared with that very large class of passages which speak so clearly of CHRIST'S kingdom as destined to extend over all things, *e g.*, *Eph.* iv. 10 ; i. 10 ; *Phil.* iii. 9-11 ; *Rev.* v. 13. I have already clearly shewn that subjection to CHRIST means perfect harmony and peace.—See note on *Phil.* iii. 21.

"THAT THROUGH DEATH HE MIGHT DESTROY THE DEVIL." *Heb.* ii. 14.

But the destruction of the Devil is quite incon-

sistent with the continuance of death and evil. Hence, if evil anywhere continue, CHRIST has failed.

"THE IMMUTABILITY OF HIS COUNSEL." *Heb.* vi. 17.

Yes, on this we build. Would you know what His counsel is? Turn to 2 *Peter* iii. 9: "Not willing that any should perish, but (willing) that all should come to repentance." The word there translated 'willing,' is the same as the 'counsel' of this passage. And thus, as His counsel is immutable, a partial salvation becomes impossible.

"FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL . . ALL SHALL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST." *Heb.* viii. 10-11.

This is spoken of the New Covenant (in which the Gentiles are fellow-heirs with the Jews), and is a distinct statement of its true extent. *All, from the least to the greatest*, are to know God. Now, can a partial salvation really be said to satisfy these plain words, on any principle of common *honesty* of interpretation, of common *truthfulness?*

"HE HATH APPEARED TO PUT AWAY SIN BY THE SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF." *Heb.* ix. 26.

Has, I would again ask, CHRIST failed? for it is the *destruction* of sin, its annihilation, that is said to be the object of the manifestation of JESUS CHRIST. But this annihilation of sin and evil cannot by any fairness of interpretation take place, if hell and its horrors go on for ever. The

dilemma is not to be evaded—CHRIST has, or He has not, failed. Sin anywhere abiding permanently is His failure.

"JESUS CHRIST, THE SAME YESTERDAY, TO-DAY, AND UNTO THE AGES." *Heb.* xiii. 8.

THE SAME throughout 'the ages;' words little heeded, I fear ; and yet which contain indeed the very essence of the Gospel—the very sum and substance of the true hope for our race. I rejoice to close with such a passage this long list of texts from Holy Scripture, which one and all testify to the assured hope there is in JESUS CHRIST of the salvation of every child of ADAM. For what is it these words teach ? not the superficial view that CHRIST is now a Saviour, and will in future be merely a judge to condemn; but that what He was on earth that He is now ; and that He will be through 'the ages' (judging ever, but only a judge that He may by it be a Saviour). "These words imply that through the ages a Saviour is needed, and will be found as much as to-day and yesterday." Indeed, I might almost say that this passage holds the key to the whole mystery of future punishment, and future salvation. It bids us look beyond the present life, to a series of ages yet to come, and there see JESUS CHRIST still working to save ; doubtless by penalty, by sharp discipline, by fiery trial in the case of hardened sinners, but still through 'the ages' the same JESUS, *i.e.*, Saviour, and destined to continue His work of salvation till the last wanderer shall have been found.

And here let me say that this series of passages of Holy Scripture, lengthened as it is, might very easily have been increased. So far from producing every possible passage that teaches the larger hope, I might have easily cited other texts that teach, or imply the same. In proof of this, let me take but two clauses of the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father," these two words really involve the whole question—they convey all I teach—are the charter of our humanity—they form a tie never to be broken between man and God. "Thy will be done on earth as in heaven." But how is His will done in heaven? It is *universally* done. Shall it not then be *universally* done on earth too? Does JESUS CHRIST put into our mouths a petition which He does not design to fulfil, nay, to fulfil in larger measure than we can hope? Would you have further proof how true it is that I have not exhausted all the passages of the New Testament that teach the larger hope?—although I prefer to appeal on this point to the Divine justice—I have but to quote the memorable words, which may fitly wind up the series, "God is love." To this point all His attributes converge. Love is the name of that character, which united they form (love eternal, infinite, divine). Can this love, by any possibility, consign to hopeless, endless, agony, its own children? Could this love, by any possibility, have called into being any one creature knowing that unending torture would be its fate? Can infinite Love ever cease to love

—can Love essential ever fail?—let the Apostle reply," Love *never faileth*," is inextinguishable.*

A few words of earnest caution must be added here. I trust it has been made plain in these pages, that in teaching universal salvation, I have not for a moment made light of sin, or advocated the salvation of sinners while they continue such. Far other is the view maintained here; it is the certain punishment of sin, it is God's judgment upon all sin (a judgment awful it may well be in its duration and its nature for the hardened offender), but in all cases directed by love and justice to the final extirpation of evil. Nay, I have opposed the popular creed on this very ground, that it in fact teaches men to make light of sin, and that in two ways: first, because it sets forth a scheme of retribution so unjust as to make men believe its penalties will never be inflicted; and next, because it in fact asserts that God either will not or cannot overcome and destroy evil and sin, but will bear with them to all eternity; will permit them to continue defiling and darkening his universe for ever and ever. Let me then say with all due emphasis,

*In the above brief notes I have not attempted an exhaustive comment. It has been my aim to point out the plain natural meaning of the passages cited in their bearing on the future destiny of man, and to present this meaning in the most simple and straightforward way. Specially have I urged the imperative necessity of truthfulness, of assuming that what the sacred writers say, that they mean, in the ordinary acceptation of their words—that in saying, *e.g.*, 'I make all things new,' CHRIST really meant all things and not some things; that in saying, 'God is the Saviour of all men,' the Apostle meant that God really does save all men.

that not one word has been written in these pages tending to represent God as a merely good natured Being—all-indulgent to the sinner—who regards as a light matter the violation of His holy law. Such shallow theology, God forbid that I should teach. Infinite love is one thing; Infinite good nature a totally unlike thing. Love is never feeble, it is (while most tender) most inexorable. It is, I fully admit, in the light of Calvary that we are bound to see the true guilt of sin. But let us beware, lest, as we stand in thought at the foot of the Cross, we dishonour the Atonement by limiting its power to save—by teaching men that it does *in fact* fail to save countless myriads—that CHRIST is after all not the victor but the vanquished. Nay, let us beware lest while in words professing to honour CHRIST, we, in fact, make *Him a liar;* for He has never said, 'I, if I be lifted up, will draw some men,' or even 'most men,' but 'I will draw *all* men unto me.'

CHAPTER IX.

"*WHAT THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACHES.*"

"The word Hell, the sacred writers *never* use in the sense which is generally given to it."—Dr. Ernest Petavel.—*The Struggle for Eternal Life.*

In the preceding chapters we have examined the various passages of the New Testament which teach, or imply clearly, the larger hope for all men. In the present chapter I purpose considering the chief texts alleged in favour of the received doctrine; and I hope to shew, that while undoubtedly the penalties threatened against sinners are sharp and terrible, still they are not *endless*. I believe that *no one passage* can be found anywhere in the Bible that so teaches, when fairly translated and understood. I must ask you, before we proceed to our examination of these passages, to bear in mind the following considerations:—

1. A fact of the *deepest significance* is this: that although certain phrases existed, by which the idea of unendingness might have been conveyed, yet none of these is applied by our Lord and His Apostles to the future punishment of the impenitent.

2. Thus *aiidios* or *ateleutetos*, a stronger word, are never used of future punishment in the New Testament. Nor is it anywhere said to be *aneu*

telous "without end," nor do we read that it shall go on *pantote*, or *eis to dienekes* "for ever."

3. Is it, I ask, conceivable that a sentence, so awful as to be absolutely beyond all human thought, should be pronounced against myriads upon myriads of hapless creatures in language *admittedly* capable of a very different meaning and *habitually so used in the New Testament?*

4. Again, while the texts already quoted in favour of the salvation of all men use language clear and explicit, and are a fair rendering of the original in all cases, it is not so in the case of the passages usually alleged to prove endless torment. In those cases where they seem to the English reader so to teach, they are either mistranslated or misinterpreted, or both.

5. As instances of wholly incorrect rendering in our version, let me take the words translated 'hell' and 'damnation,'* and 'everlasting,' 'eternal,' and 'for ever and ever,' and consider in some detail their true meaning. 'Hell' is, really, in the New Testament, the rendering of three widely differing Greek words, viz.: "Gehenna," "Hades," and "Tartarus," a fact in itself a sufficient comment on the *accuracy* of our translation. "*Gehenna*" occurs eleven times in the New Testament as used by our Lord, and once by S. JAMES. In the original Greek it

*I may again remind my readers how inaccurate is the assumption all but universally made, that these terms *are in the Bible*. They are merely in a certain human and fallible translation of the Bible, a totally different thing.

is taken almost unchanged from the Hebrew (*Ge-hinnom*, *i.e.*, valley of Hinnom), an example which our translators surely ought to have followed, and rendered *Gehenna*, as it is, by *Gehenna*. This valley lay outside Jerusalem: once a pleasant vale, and later a scene of Moloch worship, it had sunk into a common cesspit at last. Into it were flung offal, the carcases of animals, and it would seem, of criminals, and in it were kept fires ever burning (for *purification* be it remembered), while the worms were for ever preying on the decaying matter. The so-called undying worm and flame, of which so much has been made (i.) were purely temporal and finite (ii.), preyed only on the dead body (iii.) and were one and all for purification, three particulars essential to the due understanding of the passages on which the dogma of endless torments has been so unfairly based. *Hades* is a classical term, denoting merely the state or place of disembodied spirits after death. Our Revisers have, by a tardy justice, struck 'hell,' as its translation, out of their version. It occurs in the Gospels and Epistles five times, twice in the Acts, and four times in the Revelations. Its true meaning is hardly now a subject of dispute by any one: it denotes that intermediate state or place which succeeds death; a state which in our recoil from Romish error we have almost ceased to recognise at all. *Tartarus* occurs once only (in the verbal form) in the New Testament, in 2 *Peter* ii. 4. It also is a classical term, used

there most often, although not always, for the place of future punishment of the wicked. Here S. PETER applies it not to human beings, but to the lost angels ; and in their case it denotes *no final place of torment*, but a prison in which they are kept *awaiting* their final judgment; hence to render it by the term 'hell' is simply preposterous. 'Damnation,' 'damned,' both of these terms represent merely two Greek words (and their derivatives), *krino* and *katakrino*, *i.e.*, to judge and to condemn. Our Revisers have felt how unwarrantable the former translation was, for which there is indeed this excuse, that probably, when the authorised version was made, the meaning of the word 'damn' was far milder than it has since become (as was certainly the case with the term 'hell.') To import into these words the idea of endless torment is to err against all fairness and all reason ; for they simply mean to 'judge,' and at most, to 'condemn.' Of endless condemnation there is no thought in the original in any case where these words occur.*

Most significant is it that when we look to the original of the New Testament, the idea of endless punishment, that we associate with these words, 'hell,' and 'damnation,' disappears. The horrors of unending agony, which these terms conjure up for so many, vanish when we come to

*In one passage, 2 *Peter* ii. 3, the word 'damnation' represents a different Greek word, '*apoleia*,' and is rightly rendered by our Revisers as 'destruction,' in that place.

know that by 'damnation' is simply meant 'judgment,' or at most 'condemnation,' as our Revisers now very fully admit in their version of the New Testament; and by 'hell' is only meant either the place of disembodied souls —*Hades*—(as our Revisers now render it)—or the Jewish *Gehenna* (see margin of Revised Version), a place of temporary punishment, where the worms fed continually, it is true, and the fire for ever burned; but in both cases purifying, and causing no pain (for the bodies were those of the dead); and where both 'undying' worm, and 'unquenchable' fire, have long since, in their literal sense, passed away. True it is, most true, that while no unending torment is threatened by our Lord, yet His words do convey most weighty and most solemn warning to the sinner—warning that I am persuaded gains in real weight and solemnity when its true import is discerned, because the conscience recognises its justice. Lastly, let me repeat that I accept heartily and emphatically —in their true natural sense—every warning, however terrible, and every penalty threatened against sinners in God's word; but that true natural sense is not, as I hope to shew, in any one case that of endless torment. My quarrel with the advocates of the popular view (as far as the Scripture is concerned) is that, while assigning to one class of texts a meaning, which they cannot fairly bear, they at the same time wholly put out of view—blot out from the Bible in fact

—a very large and weighty class of passages, furnished by the New Testament, in favour of universal salvation. Thus, as so often happens when men persist in seeing only one side, they fail to apprehend the true meaning, even of that one side, which they present to us as though it were the whole.

Let us next consider the true meaning of the words *aion* and *aionios.** These are the originals of the terms rendered by our translators 'eternal,' 'everlasting,' 'for ever and ever:' and on this translation, so misleading, and, indeed, wholly incorrect, a vast portion of the popular dogma of endless torment is built up. I say, without hesitation, misleading and incorrect; for *aion* means 'an age,' a limited period, whether long or short, though often of indefinite length; and the adjective *aionos* means 'of the age,' 'age-long,' 'æonian' and *never* 'everlasting' (of its own proper force): it is true that it may be applied as an epithet to things that are endless, but the idea of endlessness in all such cases comes not from the epithet, but only because it

*"The word by itself, whether adjective or substantive, never means endless."—Canon FARRAR. "The conception of eternity, in the Semitic languages, is that of a long duration and series of ages."—Rev. J. S. BLUNT—*Dict. of Theology.* "'Tis notoriously known," says Bishop RUST, "that the Jews, whether writing in Hebrew or Greek, do by *olam* (the Hebrew word corresponding to *aion*), and *aion* mean any remarkable period and duration, whether it be of life, or dispensation, or polity." "The word *aion* is never used in Scripture, or any where else, in the sense of endlessness (vulgarly called eternity), it always meant, both in Scripture and out, a period of time; else how could it have a plural—how could you talk of the *æons* and *æons* of *æons* as the Scripture does,"—C. KINGSLEY.

is inherent in the object to which the epithet is applied, as in the case of God. Indeed, so far from endless duration being implied by the term *aionios*, it though, as I think, generally referring to time, yet doubtless, sometimes includes hardly any idea of duration at all, but passes, as it were, into a region above time, a region wholly moral and spiritual. Thus, in *S. John*, the æonian life (eternal life) of which he speaks is a life not measured by its duration, but a life in the unseen —life in God. And this, indeed, seems to be the true import of the term 'eternal,' which really transcends time; which is concerned not with duration, but with the spiritual world and its realities. Thus 'eternal' punishment is one thing, and 'everlasting' punishment a very different thing. Certainly, our Revisers have substituted for 'everlasting' the word 'eternal' in every passage in the New Testament, where *aionios* is the original word (so far as I have noted). Again, a point of great importance is this, that it would have been impossible for the Jews to accept CHRIST, except by assigning a limited—nay, a *very limited* duration—to those Mosaic ordinances which were said in the Old Testament to be 'for ever,' to be 'everlasting' (æonian). *Every line of the New Testament is thus in fact a proof of the limited sense of aionios.*

As a further illustration of the meaning of *aion* and *aionios*, let me point out that in the

Greek version of the Old Testament—in use in our Lord's time—and whose authority therefore should be decisive on this point—these terms are *repeatedly* applied to things that have long ceased to exist. Take a few instances out of many. Thus the AARONIC priesthood is said to be 'everlasting,' *Num.* xxv. 13. The land of Canaan is given as an 'everlasting' possession, and 'for ever,' *Gen.* xvii. 8, and xiii. 15. In *Deut.* xxiii. 3, 'for ever' is distinctly made an equivalent to 'even to the tenth generation.' In *Lam.* v. 19, 'for ever and ever' is the equivalent of from 'generation to generation.' The inhabitants of Palestine are to be bondsmen 'for ever,' *Lev.* xxv 46. In *Num.* xviii. 19, the heave offerings of the holy things are a covenant 'for ever.' CALEB obtains his inheritance 'for ever,' *Josh.* xiv. 9. And DAVID'S seed is to endure 'for ever,' his throne 'for ever,' his house 'for ever'; nay, the passover is to endure 'for ever'; and in *Isaiah* xxxii. 14, the forts and towers shall be 'dens *for ever*, *until* the spirit be poured upon us.' So in *Jude* vii., Sodom and Gomorrah are said to be suffering the vengeance of eternal (æonian) fire, *i.e.*, their temporal overthrow by fire. Indeed, quotation might be added to quotation, both from the Bible and from early authors, to prove this temporary and limited meaning of *aion* and its derivatives; but enough has probably been said to prove that it is wholly impossible, and indeed *absurd*, to contend that any idea of endless duration is *necessarily* implied by either *aion*

or *aionios*. Further, if this translation of *aionios* as 'eternal' be correct, *aion* must mean eternity. But so to render it would reduce the word of God to an absurdity. Let me give you some instances of the result of translating *aion* by eternity. In the first place, you would have over and over again to talk of the 'eternities.' We can comprehend what 'eternity' is, but what are the 'eternities?' You cannot have more than one eternity. The Doxology would run thus: "Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, 'unto the eternities.'" Take another instance. In the case of the sin against the Holy Ghost, the translation would then be, "it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this eternity nor in that to come." Our Lord's words, *St. Matt.* xiii. 39, would then run, "the harvest is the end of (the) eternity," which is to make our Lord talk nonsense. Again, in *St. Mark* iv. 19, the translation should be, "the cares," not of this world, but "the cares of this eternity choke the word." In *St. Luke* xvi. 8, "The children of this world," should be "the children of this eternity." *Romans* xii. 2, should run thus: "Be not conformed to this eternity." In 1 *Cor.* x. 11, the words, "upon whom the ends of the world are come," should be: "the ends of the eternities." Take next *Gal.* i. 4: "That He might deliver us from this present evil world," should run thus: "from this present evil eternity." In 2 *Timothy* iv. 10, the translation should be: "DEMAS hath forsaken me, having loved this

present eternity." Take a last example : "Now once at the end of the ages hath He been manifested," should read, on the popular view, "at the end of the eternities." Let me state the dilemma clearly. *Aion* either means endless duration as its necessary or at least its ordinary significance, or it does not. If it does, the following difficulties at once arise : 1—How, if it mean an infinite period, can *aion* have a plural? 2—How came such phrases to be used as those repeatedly occurring in Scripture, where *aion* is added to *aion*, if *aion* is of itself infinite ? 3—How come such a phrase as for the '*aion*' and BEYOND ?—*See (Sept.) Ex.* xv. 18 ; *Dan.* xii. 3 ; *Micah* iv. 5. 4—How is it that we repeatedly read of the *end* of the *aion?—St. Matt.* xiii. 39-40-49 ; xxiv. 3 ; xxviii. 20 ; 1 *Cor.* x. 11 ; *Heb.* ix. 26. 5—Finally, if *aion* be infinite, why is it applied over and over to what is strictly finite ? *e.g., St. Mark* iv. 19 ; *Acts* iii. 21 ; *Rom.* xii. 2 ; 1 *Cor.* i. 20, ii. 6, iii. 18, x. 11, &c., &c. But if it be not infinite, what right is there to render the adjective *aionios* (which depends for its meaning on *aion)* by the terms 'eternal' and 'everlasting ?'

There is much more to be said. Besides persisting in a rendering so misleading, our Translators have really done further hurt to those who can only read their English Bible. They have, in fact, wholly obscured, a very important doctrine, that of 'the ages.' This

when fully understood throws a flood of light on the whole plan of redemption, and the method of the Divine working, as we shall see. It will be interesting if I give you a few instances to illustrate this fact. You will, I think, see how much force and clearness is gained by restoring to the Bible the true rendering of the words *aion* and *aionios*. I will begin by a well-known passage, *S. Matt.* xxiv. 3. There our version represents the disciples as asking JESUS 'what should be the sign of the end of the world.' It should be the end of the 'age;' the close, in fact, of the Jewish age or dispensation marked by the fall of Jerusalem. In *S. Matt.* xiii. 39-40-49, the true rendering is not the end of the 'world,' but of the 'age,' a change of much significance. So *S. John* xvii. 3, 'this is life eternal,' should be 'the life of the ages,' *i.e.*, peculiar to those ages in which the scheme of salvation is being worked out. Or, take three passages of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* v. 9; ix. 12; and xiii. 20, 'eternal salvation' should be 'æonian' or of the ages; 'eternal redemption' is the redemption 'of the ages;' the eternal covenant is the 'covenant of the ages,' the covenant peculiar to the ages of redemption. In *Ephesians* iii. 11, 'the eternal purpose' is really the purpose of 'the ages,' *i.e.*, developed, worked out in 'the ages.' In the same Epistle, chapter iii. 21, there occurs a suggestive phrase, as usual, altogether obscured by our version, 'until all the generations of the age of the ages.' Thus it runs in the original,

and it is surely dealing altogether unfairly with God's Word to conceal this elaborate statement which gives such prominence to the 'ages' in the mere paraphrase of our version 'throughout all ages.' In 1 *Cor.* x. 11, 'the ends of the world' are the 'ends of the ages.' In the same Epistle, chapter ii. 6-7-8, the word *aion* occurs four times translated 'world,' it should be 'age' or 'ages' in all cases. And here it is impossible to avoid asking how—assuming that *aion* does mean 'world' in these cases—how it can yield, as an adjective, such a term as 'everlasting?' If it mean 'world,' then the adjective should be 'worldly,' 'of the world.'

Again, in *Hebrews* xi. 3, 'by whom He made the world,' should be 'the ages.' In *Hebrews* ix. 26, 'now once in the end of the world hath He appeared,' should be, 'in the end of the ages.' Again, the closing words of S. JUDE present us with a remarkable instance of the use of this word *aion*. It is literally, 'To the only God, be glory, majesty, dominion, and power—before every age—and now, and unto all the ages,' *i.e.*, before the ages began, and now, and throughout all the ages yet to come. So in *Rev.* i. 6, we have 'glory and dominion' ascribed unto CHRIST, 'unto the ages of the ages,' in the original. Again, in 1 *Tim.* i. 17, 'the King eternal' should be 'the King of ages;' vi 17, 'charge them that are rich in this world' should be 'in this age.' 2 *Peter* ii. 17, 'the mist of darkness is reserved

for ever' should be 'for the age,' for a period finite but indefinite. A striking phrase closes this Epistle, ch. iii. 18—wholly obscured in our translation—which renders 'to Him be glory both now and for ever,' instead of, as the original requires, 'unto the day of the age,' see v. 8, which explains the reference. This list I might, without difficulty, have increased, but enough has been said to shew that Scripture designs teach us what must be called the doctrine 'of the ages.' For who can fail to see, in these repeated instances from Holy Scripture, at least some definite purpose in the use of these peculiar terms; or who can refrain from the deepest regret that our Translators should have so steadily refused to acknowledge this plain fact? And it would be interesting to ask on what principle our Revisers have in one brief Epistle employed FOUR different words (or phrases) to translate this one word, *e.g.*, *Eph.* i. 21; ii. 2, 7; iii. 11-2.

Let me now try to state briefly and clearly what the doctrine of 'the ages' is. I borrow the words of Mr. JUKES: "It will, I think, be found that the adjective—*œonian*—whether applied to 'life,' 'punishment,' 'covenant,' 'times,' or even God Himself, is always connected with remedial labour, and with the idea of ages or periods, in which God is working to meet and correct some awful fall." There is present in the word in fact a certain spiritual or ethical force, and a reference to 'the ages' in which a redeeming process

is going on. It is the more needful to insist on this, because in our recoil from the Roman Catholic teaching about purgatory, masses for the dead, etc., we have gone too far into the opposite extreme, we have from our childhood been trained to limit all God's possible dealings with us, to the narrow span of our brief earthly existence. But surely this is to shut our eyes to the truer and higher teaching of the gospel. What does God mean by the repeated reference to these 'ages,' when He speaks in the New Testament of His redeeming plan? On the popular view these passages go for nothing. Is this fair or reasonable? But by accepting what they plainly teach, we are enabled to harmonize God's threatenings with His clearly expressed purpose to save all men finally. Therefore, we who teach the larger hope feel constrained to believe, that in these 'ages' is indicated the true scope of redemption, as a vast plan, the accomplishment of which is spread over many periods or stages, of which our present life forms but one, and it may be, a very brief part. Through these 'ages' it seems clearly taught in Scripture that CHRIST's work is to go on, for 'CHRIST *is the same* to-day, and yesterday, and unto the ages,' *Heb.* xiii. 8; and He assures us that He is alive unto the ages, and has the 'keys of death and of Hades,' *Rev.* i. 18 (the true rendering), words significant in this connection. This, then, on the plain warrant of Scripture (although our translation completely obscures the fact), we

believe to be the 'purpose of the ages,' *Eph.* iii. 11. We believe that not in this brief life only, but through future ages, CHRIST's work shall go on till, as we hope from His own teaching, the last straying sheep shall have been found by the Good Shepherd. Nay, we are permitted in Holy Scripture a momentary glance beyond that limit—in these all-glorious words :—'Then,' at the expiry it would seem of these ages, 'cometh the *end*,' when every enemy vanquished, 'CHRIST shall have delivered up the kingdom unto God, and God shall be All in All.'—1 *Cor.* xv. 28.

"HE SHALL BURN UP THE CHAFF WITH UNQUENCHABLE FIRE." *S. Matthew* iii. 12, *Luke* iii. 17.

(a) The word 'unquenchable' is no doubt an unfair rendering of the original—which certainly does not convey the idea of a fire that never can be quenched—but of a fire which cannot be checked or quenched in doing its work. In HOMER, where this word first occurs, it is "applied to the fire which for a few hours rages in the Grecian fleet—to the gleam of HECTOR's helmet—to glory—to laughter and to shouting." In the same popular way, *without a thought of endless duration*, it is found in ecclesiastical writers. JOSEPHUS calls the fire on the temple altar 'always unquenchable' at a time when both temple and altar were destroyed. "EUSEBIUS says of two martyrs, that they were consumed with 'unquenchable' fire ; and again of other

two, that they were destroyed by 'unquenchable' fire."—*Mercy and Judgment*, p. 406. (b) If the context be examined, it becomes clear that the reference is to a *present*, and then impending judgment—a present work of CHRIST, and not a future punishment. (c) The whole figure implies not the torture of the wicked in a future life, but the destruction, by CHRIST'S fiery baptism, of that chaff which surrounds every grain.

And here I may be permitted a brief digression to beg my readers to pause and seriously consider not traditional prejudices, but these plain facts. The usage of the Holy Scripture shews decisively that to press words like 'unquenchable' to a narrow literal meaning makes perfect nonsense of God's Word. Take a typical instance. A fire is kindled against Israel which is to burn for ever—*Jer.* xvii. 4, and yet *all* Israel is to be saved—*Rom.* xi. 26; so is 'the whole house of Israel.'—*Ez.* xxxix. 25. And again, Israel's hurt is 'incurable;' her pain is 'incurable'—*Jer.* xxx. 12, 15; but in a moment it is added, 'I will heal thee' of the (incurable) wound. All readers who are disposed to judge fairly can see the extreme significance of all this; and how very far the principle of interpretation, so plainly involved, really goes. Again, though, as we have seen, an express promise of the restoration of all Israel is given and repeated in the New Testament—*Rom.* xi. 26, yet an 'unquenchable'

fire is to burn them up—*Jer.*vii. 20; 'everlasting' reproach and 'perpetual' shame is to come on them —*Jer.*xxiii.40; 'perpetual' hissing—*Jer.*xviii.16; and 'perpetual' desolations—*Jer.* xxv. 9; 'perpetual' backsliding—*Jer.* viii. 5. Surely some indignation is called for against those who construct a sentence of endless damnation against countless millions of God's children (very largely) on the strength of phrases like the above. Let us examine further. Not alone is the sin of Israel 'incurable,' but so is the wound of Samaria —*Mic.* i. 9. And yet this 'incurable' wound is to be cured, for the captivity of Samaria is to be turned—*Ez.* xvi. 53. Nor is this all. Sodom and Gomorrha suffer the vengeance of 'eternal fire'—*Jude*, and are to be a 'perpetual' desolation—*Ezech.* xxxv. 9, and yet the 'perpetual' desolation is to end in restoration—*Ez.* xvi. 53, and this temporary meaning is constantly that of 'perpetual' in Scripture: *e.g.*, *Lev.* iii. 17, xxiv. 9, xxv. 34; *Jer.* xxxiii. 40. So, too, Ammon is to be a 'perpetual' desolation—*Zeph.* ii. 9, and yet it is to be restored—*Jer.* xlix. 6. To any fair mind such instances as the above are highly instructive as to the usage of Scripture.

"WHOSOEVER SHALL SAY THOU FOOL, SHALL BE IN DANGER OF HELL-FIRE. *S. Matt.* v. 22.

The popular interpretation is not unfounded alone, but reduces the words of CHRIST to an absurdity here. "It is incredible that to call a man a fool should be so much a worse crime than to call him Raca, that, whereas for the one

offence men are to be brought before a court of justice, for the other they are to be damned to an everlasting torment." Need I say further here that the hell-fire of this passage is the fire of '*Gehenna*,' the temporary punishment of the criminal.

"FEAR HIM WHICH IS ABLE TO DESTROY BOTH BODY AND SOUL IN HELL." *S. Matt.* x. 28, *S. Luke* xii. 13.

On any possible view these words do not teach or imply endless torment; if they teach an actual future punishment it is, at any rate, not unending pain. But they really point to God's power rather than to His intention. They say God is able to destroy body and soul; they do not say that God will do so.

"FOR WHAT IS A MAN PROFITED IF HE SHALL GAIN THE WHOLE WORLD AND LOSE HIS OWN SOUL" (LIFE). *S. Matt.* xvi. 26.

This certainly shows that a man by persisting in sin may lose his soul, a loss greater than that of the whole world. But (i) the 'lost' soul may be found; and (ii) how does this loss teach *endless* torment, or *endless* sin? or how (iii) does it prove anything against a future restitution, although to a measure of happiness far lower than if sin had not been persisted in? Further, the context seems to shew that our Lord is here speaking of a coming and of a judgment in the life time of those to whom He spoke, v. 27-8; and see on ch. xxv. 46 and iii. 12.

"HOW SHALL YE ESCAPE THE DAMNATION OF HELL?"
S. Matt. xxiii. 33.

Not one syllable is needed by way of comment here, but to replace a misleading translation by the true rendering—"How shall ye escape the judgment of *Gehenna?*"—the Jewish punishment awarded to criminals.

"IT IS PROFITABLE FOR THEE THAT ONE OF THY MEMBERS SHOULD PERISH, AND NOT THAT THY WHOLE BODY SHOULD BE CAST INTO HELL."
Matt. v. 29-30, and xviii. 8-9.

These two passages are so similar that they may be considered together, and may be compared with *S. Mark* ix. 43-50, where a full comment is given. Here it is enough to say that the 'hell' of the text is merely '*Gehenna*,' and the punishment, that temporary one inflicted on evil doers. 'Hell-fire' is the fire of *Gehenna*, already explained; 'everlasting fire,' of chapter xviii. 8, is æonian fire.

"AND THESE SHALL GO AWAY INTO EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT, BUT THE RIGHTEOUS INTO LIFE ETERNAL." *S. Matt.* xxv. 46.

This oft quoted text, if fairly translated, requires an interpretation quite distinct from that of the popular theology, and opposed to it. (a) 'Everlasting' and 'eternal' merely represent the Greek word *aionios*, and mean 'of or belonging to an age'—æonian, see pp. 295-303. (b) The word translated punishment is a remarkable one, it means, strictly, *pruning*, *i.e.*, corrective punishment, and should be so rendered. (c) So that

which is threatened is *the opposite* of our popular hell; it is an æonian discipline, a corrective process, 'proper to the age'—or 'ages.' (d) And of this beneficent purpose there is a hint often unnoticed in the term applied to those on the left hand, it is properly 'kids' or 'kidlings,' a diminutive, implying a certain affection. And so for the very paschal offering a kid was eligible (*Ex.* xi.) equally with a lamb; and in the Catacombs the Good Shepherd is at times depicted as bearing home on His shoulders A KID, not a lamb, *i.e.*, a GOAT, not a sheep. (e) Nor must we forget that, in *Rev.* xx. 11, the throne of judgment is WHITE—the sign of peace and amity. (f) But it will no doubt be said that the same word is applied to the happiness of the saved and to the punishment of the lost; and that if it does not mean endless in the latter case, then the bliss of the redeemed is thus rendered uncertain. I reply, even were it so, we are not at liberty to mistranslate the original: but further, no greater error can be imagined than this assertion. For in this passage all that is asserted is, that a certain 'æonian' penalty, and a certain 'æonian' reward will respectively be the lot of the wicked and of the righteous; so far both the penalty and the reward stand on the same footing. But this *leaves perfectly open* the whole question of the precise duration of either, so far as the present passage goes. For the term æonian is quite indefinite, it does not touch the question of the limit of time; it simply teaches that both

reward and penalty go on to a future age or ages. The question what will happen *after* this age or ages is not raised in this passage. (g) And this must be said: I have in these comments made two assumptions both extremely doubtful, and both favourable to the traditional creed. (I.) I have assumed the reference of *aionios* to time, which is at least not capable of proof; for with perfect fairness it may have here that spiritual, ethical, meaning it unquestionably at times has; and the meaning then would simply be, that just and unjust pass into spiritual states of punishment and bliss respectively. (II.) I have assumed in these remarks the reference of this passage to the final judgment, but that is, in fact, in the very highest degree improbable; for these words close a *continuous* discourse extending over chapters xxiv-v. There is no break throughout. And the question of the disciples, in chapter xxiv., is really not about the end of the 'world,' but of the 'age.' Thus, if we for a moment can divest ourselves of traditional impressions, and take the Scripture itself as our guide, we shall see that it is not consistent with respect to our Lord to refer to a distant future, that judgment of which He (with all respect to commentators be it spoken) Himself says distinctly, (ch. xxiv. 34), ALL THE THINGS He is speaking of should be fulfilled before the passing away of the then generation; and which finds a perfectly natural fulfilment in the terrible judgment, consequent on the fall of Jerusalem, and the end of the (Jewish)

age (as these events would be described in the metaphors of the East.)

"IT IS GOOD FOR THEE TO ENTER INTO LIFE MAIMED, RATHER THAN HAVING THY TWO HANDS TO GO INTO HELL, INTO THE UNQUENCHABLE FIRE. . . WHERE THEIR WORM DIETH NOT, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED. FOR EVERY ONE SHALL BE SALTED WITH FIRE."—*Rev. Vers.* *S. Mark* ix. 43-50.

(a) Note, first, that the revised text *omits* v. 44 and 46, which lend in our ordinary version so much weight to the threats here uttered. (b) Observe next that the whole passage depends on the statement of v. 49—a fact generally overlooked—"*For every one* shall be salted 'with fire.'" These words assign the reason for the whole preceding clauses, and indeed seem plainly enough to shew that the true reference in this passage is to some sacrificial or purifying process, which *every one* must undergo; as in 1 *Cor.* iii. 13, "The fire shall try every man's work." If the sacrifice be not made voluntarily—if the eye or the foot be not sacrificed—a sharper sacrifice —a severer penalty will be demanded. (c) The word translated hell is simply, as already explained, the Jewish Gehenna—the valley of Hinnom—a place of purely *temporary* punishment. (d) The phrase, "the fire is not quenched," is quoted from the Old Testament, where it occurs in the Septuagint eight times, *Lev.* vi. 13; 2 *Kings* xxii. 17; 2 *Chron.* xxxiv. 25; *Isaiah* xx. 12; *Jer.* vii. 20, xvii. 27; *Ex.* xx. 47; *Isaiah* lxvi. 24; (see, too, *Amos.* v. 6; *Jer.* xxi. 12.) But in *all* these passages the flame

is *temporary*. The last-named passage, *i.e.*, *Is.* lxvi. 24, is that specially quoted here; and the reference is to the worm and to the fire that preyed on the dead bodies of malefactors, cast out into Gehenna. In the striking metaphor of the East, these worms, and this fire are said not to die, and not to be quenched; because the fires were kept constantly burning to drive away pollution, and the worm was always preying on the corpses and offal. The phrase, 'into the fire that never shall be quenched,' it will be seen disappears in the Revised Version. The original word is the same already commented on in the note on *S. Matthew* iii. 12, translated 'unquenchable,' and proved to have been frequently applied to a fire, not merely temporary, but often *very brief* in its duration.

"HE THAT SHALL BLASPHEME AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST HATH NEVER FORGIVENESS, BUT IS IN DANGER OF ETERNAL DAMNATION." *S. Mark* iii. 29.

On a question of this kind, involving the interpretation of a phrase, drawn from a language still living in their day, it is most important to note the attitude of most Fathers towards the sin commonly called 'unpardonable.' "The notion," says BINGHAM, "that most of the antients had of the sin against the Holy Ghost, was not that it was absolutely unpardonable, but that men were to be punished for it both in this world and in the next, unless they truly repented of it."—ii. 921. So ATHANASIUS says of this sin, "If they repent they *may obtain pardon*, for there is

no sin unpardonable with God to them who truly repent."—*Ib.* ii. 970. So S. CHRYSOSTOM, "We know that this *sin was forgiven to some that repented* of it." . . . What is then the meaning of it? That it is a sin less capable of forgiveness than all others.—*Ib.* 971. So VICTOR, of Antioch, S. AMBROSE, &c. And so DIONYSIUS (Syrus), as late as the tenth century, says: "*Many* who did blaspheme against the Holy Ghost afterwards repented, and *obtained pardon.*" Two points are *very noteworthy*, and I ask attention to them (i.) that these Fathers did *not* believe any sin to be in itself unpardonable, (ii.) that they did *not* believe the phrases *eis ton aiona* or *aionios*, to mean 'never' or 'everlasting,' as our version renders them. And, now, turning to the very words of the Evangelist, we remark that *this passage is wholly silent as to endless torment;* the harshest view of its meaning does not involve that: a fact generally forgotten. The context, too, contains a very wide and elastic promise of forgiveness: "All their sins shall (in fact) be forgiven to the sons of men, and blasphemies *wherewith soever* they shall blaspheme; but," &c. It also contains a very distinct hint as to forgiveness in a future age, for if some sins were not to be forgiven after death, *S. Matt.* xii. 32, could hardly have been written. Again, the words translated 'never' are, literally, 'for,' or 'during the age,' and rather imply that after that indefinite period forgiveness may be had; especially so when the repeated and

unequivocal promises of the restitution of all things are considered. A few words may be added on this terrible sin. It is the sin of the Scribes and Pharisees, *i.e.*, of the hard, narrow religionist, and *not* of the ungodly. The sin itself is very clearly defined, "because they said He hath an unclean spirit," v. 30. Its essence lies in confounding the works of the Good and Evil Spirits, as, *e.g.*, assigning to God any kind of evil act. On this point I have already spoken. Here I may just ask, must it not be a near approximation to this awful sin to assign to God deeds which, like endless torture, our conscience tells us are evil and cruel ?

"GOOD WERE IT FOR THAT MAN (JUDAS) IF HE HAD NOT BEEN BORN." *S. Mark* xiv. 21; *S. Matt.* xxvi. 24.

Beyond all question, the original requires (as our Revisers in the margin admit) a wholly different rendering, 'good were it for Him, *i.e.*, CHRIST, if that man, *i.e.*, JUDAS, had not been born.' In the opening of the sentence, CHRIST is designated by the pronoun *autos*, and JUDAS by the pronoun *ekeinos*. What our version does is, in violation of grammar, to turn round, and in the last clause of the same sentence to invert this order, applying *autos* to JUDAS, and *ekeinos* to CHRIST.* Those who triumphantly quote this text against the larger hope, are reminded (i.) that they do so at the expense of Greek syntax ;

*If Judas's death, as *S. Matt.* seems to imply, preceded that of Jesus, then the universal liberation from Hades (see ch. iv. p. 106), would involve his case.

(ii.) that they in any case gain nothing for the traditional creed, for (iii.) even if taken in their extremest sense, the words of JUDAS' doom *wholly fail* to prove that he was condemned to endless suffering, for they would be satisfied to the utmost if JUDAS were to have a sentence of annihilation passed on him at the Last Great Day : nay, had he at the moment of betrayal died, "and never suffered one pang more, they would be to the fullest extent true." And when we remember the clear and repeated promises of *universal* salvation already quoted, we may well hesitate, and more than hesitate, before we put such a sense on the woe pronounced on JUDAS as to make it plainly contradict all these promises of Scripture. And for this there is yet a further reason, there is a special promise that *all Israel shall be saved*, and JUDAS was assuredly an Israelite.

"THE PARABLE OF DIVES." *S. Luke* xvi. 26.

(a) DIVES, like JUDAS, is a son of ABRAHAM, who so addresses him, "and *all* Israel shall be saved," says S. PAUL expressly. (b) DIVES was certainly not in hell, but in Hades (as our Revised Version admits), *i.e.*, in the intermediate state before the Day of Judgment, not in a state absolutely fixed. (c) DIVES is represented as distinctly improved by his chastisement : he has learned to think for others. Can God by His discipline *produce this amendment merely to crush it out in a future state of hopeless pain?* Is this credible? (d) It is not said that the

gulf shall continue impassible ; what is said is, that it is so (was then so). The case is as if a man were imprisoned for a fixed time, and his friends are sternly told "between him and you is a barrier placed which cannot be passed." This would be exactly true, though the barrier were to be removed, when the fixed period of punishment ceased. (e) And even were this not so, who are we to say that the gulf, impassable to man, cannot be passed by CHRIST, by Him who hath the "*keys of death and hell?*" (f) Those inclined to doubt what I have above said may be well referred to S. AMBROSE, who, commenting on *Ps.* cviii., says thus : "So then that DIVES in the Gospel, although a sinner, is pressed with penal agonies that he may *escape the sooner*," thus asserting clearly his belief in DIVES' final salvation. And S. JEROME expressly asserts that CHRIST liberated those souls who were in this very place.

"HE THAT BELIEVETH NOT THE SON SHALL NOT SEE LIFE." *S. John* iii. 36.

Here the meaning is clear ; the unbeliever, *continuing such*, shall not see life, but if he cease to be an unbeliever, he may surely obtain peace. If it were not so, all would be lost. If the sense put properly on this passage were true, 'no man once an unbeliever could have any hope.'

"THE RESURRECTION OF DAMNATION." *S. John* v. 29.

Here it is hardly needful to do more than

point to the revised translation, 'the resurrection of *judgment*,' not even condemnation, which would be a different Greek word.

Of the Parables of judgment, let me say briefly that to build definite conclusions, of the most awful import, on these sacred stories, and their metaphors, would seem quite unfair. Let us take perhaps the most stern of all—those in *S. Matt.* xiii., and even in these there is, in fact, no question of the end of 'the world'—it should be 'the age' merely; and no hint is given that the 'fire' spoken of should go on for ever. Admitting to the fullest the awful warning they convey, I am persuaded that their true meaning—as also that of *S. Matt.* xxv., and its great judgment scene—is wholly obscured by adjourning to some remote future the facts asserted; forgetting that the judgment throne is now standing, and that we are now standing before it; and that CHRIST'S 'unquenched' fire is now burning; *unquenchable*, thank God, till (as the whole usage of the word in the original imports) it has fully done its work.

We have now considered, if not all, yet certainly all the strongest passages contained in the New Testament, and supposed to teach the popular creed, except those of the mysterious book of *Revelation*. To this now let us turn. And here, at the outset, I protest against the utter unfairness of attempting to build any

definite theory of hell on the imagery of a book of mysterious visions, and full of highly-toned Oriental metaphors. Its visions speak the language not of prose but of poetry, and that the poetry of an Eastern race, far more imaginative and highly wrought than that of the West. To judge these metaphors as though they spoke the language of scientific theology is worse than unfair, it is even absurd. Take, then, the passages most often quoted. Turn to chapter xiv. 9-11. Terrible as it seems at first sight, it is, I believe, really concerned with the times of NERO—who is the Beast. The worshippers of the Beast who are to be tormented, are his followers; and the reference in the torment is to the terrible earthly calamities actually happening to Rome at that epoch. Who, of whatever school of thought, is there who does not feel a weight rolled away, when he perceives that the true meaning of the highly wrought metaphors of this passage—as to the worshippers of the Beast being tormented night and day, in the presence of the Lamb and the Holy Angels—may be most fully found in the terrible earthly sufferings which befell Rome, "while the Lamb and the Holy Angels are, in human language, represented as cognisant of this punishment?" Even Mr. ELLIOTT, in his *Horæ Apocalypticæ*, explains this passage of merely temporary judgment. But whether NERO be or be not the Apocalyptic Beast, it remains absolutely certain that all this awful language is, in the undoubted usage of Scripture,

used elsewhere of MERELY TRANSIENT and TEMPORAL judgments. In proof of this, turn to *Isaiah* xxxiv. 9-10, and read the deeply impassioned language in which it describes the temporal calamities of the land of Idumea—its streams are "to be turned into pitch—*its dust into brimstone—its land into burning pitch—it shall not be quenched night nor day—its smoke is to go up for ever.*" Now when we know that these metaphors—sounding so awfully, do yet refer to merely temporal judgment—to judgments of a momentary duration, so to speak, we shall the better be able to assign its true meaning to all the figurative and poetical language of this book of *Revelation.* Nor do I speak of this book only. The whole Bible is Oriental. Every line and letter breathes the spirit of the East, with its hyperboles and metaphors, and what to us seem utter exaggerations. In fact, if such language be taken literally, its whole meaning is lost. When the sacred writers want to describe the dusky redness of a lunar eclipse, they say the moon is 'turned into blood.' He who perverts God's Word is not the man who reduces this sacred poetry to its true meaning and its legitimate dimensions. Nay, that man perverts and handles deceitfully the Bible who takes literally the impassioned words of Orientals, who hardens into dogmas the glowing metaphors of Eastern poetry. So with our Lord's words—if I take them literally—I very often pervert their sense. Am I in very deed to *hate* my father and

mother because CHRIST says it is necessary so to do; or to pluck out my right eye literally? Or take a case—well put by Canon FARRAR—to shew how widely the true sense of the figures of Scripture differs from the literal meaning. Egypt is more than once said, in the Bible, to have been an *iron furnace* to the Jews; and yet their condition there was so far removed from being one of torment, that they actually said, "it was well with us there," and positively sighed for its enjoyments. It common fairness, therefore, I am forced to maintain that no doctrine of endless pain can be based on figures of Eastern imagery. Having, then, already considered the well-known passage in ch. xiv., it will be sufficient if I close this chapter by an examination of another often quoted passage.

"BUT THE FEARFUL AND UNBELIEVING . . SHALL HAVE THEIR PART IN THE LAKE THAT BURNETH WITH FIRE AND BRIMSTONE: WHICH IS THE SECOND DEATH."
Revelation xxi. 8.

(a) It will be necessary to consider the entire context of this verse, if we desire to understand its purport. It opens with the vision of the great white throne, ch. xx. 14, and we find that after the judgment of that Great Day, so far from death and hell (Hades) continuing, they are "cast into a lake of fire"—very unlike, nay, contradicting the popular view.

(b) Then comes a declaration that God is to dwell with men—not with the saints—but with men as such, and that as a consequence, they

shall be *His people, and God shall be with them, and be their God.*

(c) It is distinctly said, there shall be *no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain.* Is this not a denial of an endless hell rather than an affirmation of it—nay, an emphatic denial of such a doctrine?

(d) Then comes a voice from the throne with a glorious promise, "*Behold, I make all things new,*" not some things. Note, too, this promise is remarkably emphasised, it opens with the word "*Behold,*" to draw attention to it: it closes with the command to write it, 'for these words are true and faithful.' Was there no reason for this? Is there not thus attention drawn to this as the central point of the whole vision — *all things made new?* But this again is a denial of the popular creed.

(e) In close connection with such promises come the highly figurative threats of the lake of fire. It is perhaps possible to argue that this may imply (although I do not think so) the destruction of those cast into it; but it is *wholly impossible to understand it as teaching endless torment,* in the face of what has just been promised—(no more crying, nor pain, v. 4.) Therefore, I cannot but conclude, looking at the repeated promises (see 'c' and 'd') of this very passage, which contrast in their *perfect clearness* with the highly figurative language of its threats,* looking

* "How little can we build dogmas on such metaphors as the Devil being cast with the Beasts (NERO and the Roman world-

at the true meaning of God's judgments and at the whole spirit of Holy Scripture—nay, its express declaration of universal pardon — that what is here taught is some sharp, fiery, discipline (a fire that purifies while it punishes) a fire that is, in God's mysterious way, an agent in making all things new.

We thus see that the Apocalyptic visions lend as little support to the dogma of endless torment as do the other Scriptures. That doctrine is not, I am deeply persuaded, to be found in a single passage of God's word, if translated accurately and fairly interpreted. And here let me, as I conclude this branch of our subject, before passing on, ask those who honestly believe that with this dogma of hell-fire is bound up the sole force able to deter men from sin, to remember that to assert this is to contradict the whole weight of human experience. For in every age experience has shewn decisively, that it is not the magnitude of the penalty that deters men from sin or crime, it is the certainty of its infliction. Nay, it must be said on the contrary that few doctrines have done so much in these days to shake the belief in any real punishment of sin hereafter as has that of an endless hell. For as I have already briefly attempted to prove (p. 60)

powers) and the false Prophet—ch. xx. 10-14—into the lake of fire and brimstone . . into which also are to be cast two such abstract entities as 'Death' and 'Hades.' At any rate this lake of fire is on the earth; and immediately *afterwards* we read of that earth being destroyed, and of a *new* heaven and a *new* earth, in which there is to be *no more death or curse*."—Canon FARRAR.

nobody can be found who, *by his acts*, shews that he in fact believes and accepts so terrible a dogma. From this it follows, that so long as it is taught, the whole subject of future punishment becomes, for the mass of mankind, doubtful, shadowy, and unreal. Thus a tone of secret incredulity is fostered, an incredulity which, beginning at this particular dogma, assuredly does not end there, but affects the whole of revealed religion. It is not merely that those who still teach the popular creed thus furnish the sceptic with the choicest of his weapons, by enlisting the moral forces of our nature on the side of unbelief. They do more than this. They thus, unconsciously I admit, but most effectively, teach men to profess a creed with the lips to which the spirit and the life render no vital allegiance. By this means the whole Gospel of JESUS CHRIST is lowered and discredited, for if men see a doctrine of this kind maintained in words but in fact denied (because in practice found to be wholly incredible) they will assuredly apply the lesson, so learned, of professed belief and real scepticism, to the whole system of Christian truth.

Before closing, I would dwell on a fact which often escapes notice. Even assuming, for argument sake, the accuracy of the interpretation placed by the traditional creed on the passages just discussed, even that wholly fails to prove endless punishment: that might be a reasonable ground for saying, "there are in Scripture two

seemingly contradictory sets of passages. I must wait and pray till all becomes clear; and meantime I can formulate no conclusion." But it would furnish no fair ground for saying, "I must expunge from the Bible those passages that teach universal restoration." This is often forgotten, but it is not to be denied. And even this way of putting the case strains a point in favour of the traditional creed. Because, since all admit God to be Love, and nobody admits that God is cruel, the presumption is wholly in favour of the milder view, turning out the true one.* And so I am unable to see, even on the ground taken by the advocates of the traditional creed, that their conclusions are warranted.

* Besides, a promise binds in a sense that a threat does not, for nobody is aggrieved, though a threat remains unfulfilled.

CHAPTER X.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.

"The little Pilgrim listened with an intent face, clasping her hands and said, 'But it never could be that our Father should be overcome by evil. Is that not known in all the worlds?'"—*The Little Pilgrim.*

"This world is strange and often terrible; but be not afraid, all will come right at last. Rest will conquer Restlessness; Faith will conquer Fear; Order will conquer Disorder; Health will conquer Sickness; Joy will conquer Sorrow; Pleasure will conquer Pain; Life will conquer Death; Right will conquer Wrong. *All will be well at last.*"—*Madame How and Lady Why.*—C. KINGSLEY.

I shall commence this closing chapter by pointing out that the question of universalism is usually argued on a basis altogether misleading. It is commonly stated as though the point involved was chiefly or wholly man's endless suffering. Awful and repulsive to every moral instinct as is that view of human destiny, it is not the real turning point of this controversy. The vital question is this, that the popular creed teaches the perpetuity of evil, points to a victorious Devil, and to sin as finally triumphant over God. Of all this I have spoken, but in this retrospect let me again most earnestly press this as the vital point, that our choice lies between accepting the victory of CHRIST or of the Evil One, and *between those alternatives only.* Escape from this dilemma there is none. It avails nothing to diminish, as so many now teach, the number of the lost; or to assert as others do, that they will

be finally annihilated. It cannot be too clearly pointed out, that all such modifications leave absolutely *untouched* the great central difficulty of the popular creed—the triumph of evil. Sin for ever present with its taint, were it but in a *single* instance; sin, which God has been unable to remove (and has had no resource but to annihilate the sinner) is sin triumphant, and death (emphatically) victorious. For "ALL SYSTEMS OF PARTIAL SALVATION INVOLVE A COMPROMISE WITH EVIL ON GOD'S PART."

A strange delusion induces very many to fancy that all real objections to the traditional creed are met, if the grosser forms of teaching it are abandoned. This means, I presume, "let us still punish for ever and ever, even though all chance of amendment is over. But be careful to apply the suffering to the highest part—to the spiritual nature. Rack the spirit with endless woe and undying remorse, and who can be so very unreasonable as to complain? Hand over to the Devil for ever and ever one formed in God's own image, one for whom the Son of God died. Do it tenderly—consign the sufferer to the grip and sway of endless evil: but do it lovingly. It only lasts for ever—ONLY FOR EVER AND EVER. Who can be so unreasonable as to murmur?" Men's minds must be deeply drugged, and the very power of reasoning partly paralysed, when such pleas are advanced; or when they fancy that, by diminishing the area of damnation they

elude all objections to endless evil. As though you could solve moral questions by process of arithmetic, or annul the Devil's victory by diminishing the number of his victims. So long as one soul for whom CHRIST died remains in the Devil's grip for ever, so long and so far is the Devil victor. No logic, no sophistry, no evasion can by a hair's breadth alter that fact.

A further point there is, so vital that I dare not omit it, though to touch it may involve the charge of presumption. I feel unable to decide how far Bishop BUTLER designed to teach that 'probation' is an adequate description of our moral relationship to God. Yet it seems certain that practically his great name is (largely) the authority with those who teach in fact, if not in words, that God is primarily the Judge, or the Inspector, of His Creatures. Against this idea, which seems to me to be working on every side untold mischief, I must once more protest. Hence comes the fatal blot of placing Sin at the centre of the moral system, and not Love. Hence the removal of 'Our Father,' while the Inspector or Accountant-General takes His place. And this system is believed to be the Gospel of JESUS CHRIST. Hence vain and idle wranglings over a first and second probation, on the part of those who forget that, if God is our Father, the central fact that dominates all else in our moral relationship to Him, is the education of humanity—of all His human children. Doubtless no education

can go on without trial, but we are "tried *that we may be educated, and not educated that we may be tried.* . . The essential characteristic of a Father's love is that it is *inextinguishable.* . . If I am here simply on trial, if I regard God as one who is keeping a debtor and creditor account with me, I may in word call him Father, and in word ascribe love to Him, but I cannot really regard Him as Father."—ERSKINE—*The Purpose of God.*

And to this capital error on the question of probation are added others as to Love itself—*e.g.* a denial (virtually), that God is Love. For to say that God is loving, is in fact to make love an attribute merely, like justice or wrath—a fatal mistake, yet made on every side. Nor is this all, for the very essence of Love itself is misconceived, when it is confounded with mere kindness or good nature; forgetting the awful, inexorable, relentless side of true (divine) love; forgetting, too, that this love is essentially inextinguishable. With a Gospel based on errors so cardinal as to substitute for the Father, the Almighty Inspector—for His training, the idea of probation merely—with the central fact wrong, what wonder if all the rest is out of gear? Who could expect astronomy to flourish, if men were taught that this earth is the centre, and not the sun? So with the moral universe. If I place Sin at the centre, and not Love—man, not God—I paralyse every motion, and wholly invert the divine order.

Too often, again, is the Scriptural argument for the larger hope stated as though it were weak. No greater mistake can be made. Those who have reason to shrink from an appeal to the Scriptures are not universalists, but are the advocates of endless sin; of a baffled Saviour; of a victorious Devil. It is they who shut their eyes to the teaching of the Bible. It is they who make light of its repeated promises of a restitution of all things through CHRIST. It is they who make God's word of none effect by their traditions. To the Bible they come drugged, all unconsciously, by early prejudice; saturated with cruel traditions, to whose horror long familiarity has deadened the mind. And so it is that many really cannot see in after life the true force of Scripture, when it so plainly asserts the restitution of all things. Hence the painful evasions; the manifold sophistry; the halting logic that (honestly) turns the Bible upside down; *i.e.*, teaching that all men drawn to CHRIST, means half mankind drawn to the Devil; all things reconciled through CHRIST, means the final perdition of half the universe. The notion, which is in fact that of the popular creed, *i.e.*, that God is in the Bible detailing the story of His own defeat, is telling how sin has proved too strong for Him; this notion is worse than absurd. Assuredly the Bible is not the story of sin, deepening into eternal ruin—of creation, darkened for ever by a ghastly hell—of God's own Son, worsted in His utmost effort; it is

from the opening to the close the story of grace stronger than sin—of life victorious over every form of death—of God triumphing over evil.

And next let me once more repeat that the larger hope emphatically and fully accepts the doctrine of retribution awaiting unrepented sin hereafter. Its advocates believe in a retribution stern and unflinching, and prolonged till the stubborn will yields to the stronger will of God and His CHRIST; till He who has been lifted up on the Cross shall have drawn to Himself all men, as He so plainly promises. Those who picture universalism as some easy-going system, which refuses to face the stern facts of sin and misery and retribution, are absolutely and hopelessly wrong. We recognise fully the stern and awful side of God's ways. *We press on all the impenitent the awful certainty of a wrath to come.* Nay, we can urge this with infinitely more chance of acceptance, because we teach retribution in a form that does not wound the conscience; because we dare not teach that finite sin shall receive an infinite penalty; or that evil in any form is too strong for the Cross of CHRIST to overcome Few things, I repeat, have so hindered the spread of the larger hope as the groundless notion that it implies an inadequate sense of sin, and pictures God as a weakly indulgent Being, careless of holiness, provided the happiness of His creatures is secured. But in fact it is those who teach the popular creed,

and not we, who make light of sin. I press once more this point. To teach unending sin in hell, were it only in a solitary instance, and under any conceivable modification or mitigation, is to teach at once the victory of evil, and the toleration of sin by God? To us this seems at once a blasphemy and a folly—a blasphemy, because it imputes to God acquiescence in sin, which He can destroy if He will; a folly, because it teaches that His omnipotence breaks down at the very moment it is most needed.

And here we may perhaps ask, can any light, however small, be thrown on this awful mystery of sin? For all practical purposes, I reply there are but two possible views of moral evil. It is eternal, destined to endure as long as God Himself, which is in fact Dualism;* or it is temporary and finite, not rooted in the essential constitution of nature, but in God's mysterious plan, permitted only to serve a higher end. It deserves notice that this view of moral evil seems to be substantially that of THOMAS AQUINAS; "he makes the elevation of the creature above the original capabilities of his nature, to depend on the introduction of sin."— *Neander* viii. 216. On this view it is a stage in the development of the creature, and of this there seems a *hint* conveyed in the story of the first sin. By it

* May it not be said a peculiarly evil form of Dualism, for in it the Good Spirit knowingly and freely permits of His own will the entrance of evil, which He knows will endure eternally?

man is said to have 'BECOME AS ONE OF US,' as though the very Fall implied a Rise.* And what but this idea can adequately express the meaning of that most memorable passage, "*God hath shut up all men unto disobedience, in order that He might have mercy upon all?*" Note here the stress boldly laid (i.) on God's agency and not on man's will. (ii.) The universality alike of sin and of salvation, both are equally absolute, effectual, universal. (iii.) Sin is permitted *only* as leading up to, as involving salvation. And in conformity with this view we see not an arrangement by which man starts innocent in the race of life, free to chose sin or not, but a (virtual) provision for the hereditary transmission of evil; by which innocence *becomes impossible* to every human being; by which every child of ADAM is, in the Divine plan, '*shut up unto (sin) disobedience*,' an arrangement wholly inconceivable on the part of a good and loving Father, except with a settled purpose of mercy to every one. I am not presumptuous enough to fancy that I have a novel solution to offer of the profound mystery of evil. But it is certain that, if the Bible be in any real sense the Word of God, then no solution is possible which refuses in fact (as do almost all interpreters) even seriously to consider certain striking passages (which I shall quote): on the ground probably that reverence for the Bible is reverence for those

*Does S. CLEMENT of Alexandria mean this when he speaks of ADAM as "made a man by disobedience."—*Adm. ad gent.*

parts of the Bible that suit our own views. These passages have been, in fact, so completely ostracised, that something like an apology is needed for pressing their claims to recognition.

"I am the Lord, and there is none else; I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and CREATE EVIL; I THE LORD DO ALL THESE THINGS."—*Is.* xlv. 7. Note the emphatic repetition. True reverence, true honesty, demand a full and frank recognition of these words. Nor do they stand alone in their general teaching. Far from it. Take, *e.g.*, the memorable scene when Satan appears before God, and receives from Him power over Job; or that passage in which we read of an evil spirit *from the Lord (1 Sam.* xvi. 14.) Do these mean practically nothing? And, again, God is represented as saying to the lying spirit, 'Go forth and do so': and so the Lord is said to have '*put a lying spirit*' in the mouth of the prophets *(I Kings* xxii. 23). I am advancing no theory, but quoting Holy Scripture, and protest against explaining it away under the plea of reverence! which is, precisely, what so many do. Bearing all this in mind, we see light falling on the *(repeated)* statement that 'God hardens' the human heart, 'shuts the eyes lest they should see; and the ears lest they should hear.' And it is but a shallow and unworthy evasion to say, that in the Old Testament God is represented as doing that which He permits to be done; for the New Testament is quite as emphatic on this

point. It is vain to deny that S. PAUL accepts and endorses the Old Testament on this head. "Whom He will HE HARDENETH."* "HE HATH SHUT up all men unto unbelief." "GOD GAVE them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see." Such is S. PAUL'S emphatic testimony, which to evade is surely impossible, if we act fairly. S. JOHN, too, echoes and re-affirms ISAIAH'S saying that the Jews COULD NOT believe BECAUSE God had blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts. To me it seems a poor and sham reverence for the Bible to explain away all this. To a thoughtful mind light comes from calmly facing, and fully embracing these hard sayings. And so S. PAUL adds: The law was given in order that the 'offence might abound' (with this phrase compare the statement that the law was our *schoolmaster* to bring us to CHRIST.) From all this we seem to see emerging the *educational* aspect of evil: we seem to understand the significant words, "God hath shut up all men unto disobedience;" and those words also that relate how the 'creature (creation) was made subject unto vanity,' not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope. God's sovereignty is everywhere to be traced. The error lies not in asserting this, for it is true; but in failing to see that this sovereignty means mercy to all His children.

*We are not entitled to (practically) evade this, because it is sometimes said in Scripture that men harden their own hearts—which is, of course, most true,

A few words I would add on this question of evil. As Creation is for the Deity, to enter into finite relations, and to subject His plans to definite limits, so it may be that thus evil, physical and moral, is in a sense inevitable. And it may be that, by the training and collision, thus involved, a higher type of character is formed than would be otherwise possible, *e.g.*, self sacrifice, self restraint, etc., seem to require a background of evil for their existence ; although I believe that certain results of this have not always been thought out by its advocates.* A Creation thus advancing to perfection by a certain, if slow, victory over evil, may possibly be a nobler thing than a Creation so safe-guarded as to have never fallen. I shall neither affirm, nor deny, these propositions. But morality and reason require one thing: they require this condition, that Creation shall be in fact so advancing ; that the victory over evil shall be a victory indeed, and not a compromise—*i.e.*, they require not partialism *in any form*, but universalism.† Evil in process of extinction, nay, in the Divine plan already extinguished—is tolerable. But when evil, moral or physical, becomes eternal ; when it ceases to be a means and becomes an end ; when it is no merely passing stain, but is wrought into the very tissue of the universe—

*Thus, if so, what of heaven? Must evil be present there to elicit virtue? Again, if the highest type of character be the result of conflict with evil, must the Seraphim and Cherubim, &c., have known evil? and so on up to the very throne.

† For annihilation is no victory : it is death triumphant over life.

enduring as God Himself; when God is taught as deliberately opening, or at least constructing, the door, through which this hideous thing will enter, as an eternal horror in His Creation; then it is that we are compelled to refuse assent; compelled by our very reverence for God; by the supreme voice within, which if God anywhere speaks with man is indeed His voice. And this prepares us for a very interesting question, viz., whether the evil effects of long continued wilful sin ever wholly pass away. It may be replied, perhaps never in some cases. Certainly some 'enter into life halt and maimed.' Obstinate persistency in sin may leave on the spirit a wound whose evil effects are permanent. Two results of this fact deserve notice. (i.) It answers the plausible taunt cast at the larger hope as leading the careless to say, "if this be true I will have my fling, for all will come 'right at last.'" Is this so? Yes, in one sense. *No*, in another Yes, because such men do 'enter into life' though after long years (or ages) of penalty and darkness. No, because they enter halt and maimed spiritually. (ii.) May not this furnish a meeting place for reasonable men on both sides? For final and universal restoration is not opposed to perpetual penalty in a certain sense; because the wilful sinner, though saved, may yet suffer a perpetual loss, *a pœna damni*, loss of the highest spiritual blessedness hereafter.

And I must add that every form of partial salva-

tion is based on, is rooted in selfishness. Let me explain. This selfishness is largely unconscious, but is not the less a real, vital, fact. Most people who think on such subjects will have noticed a strange and shocking unwillingness on the part of the so-called religious world even to entertain the idea of universalism. The unspoken feeling (indeed not always unspoken) is this—If an endless hell is gone, perhaps my heaven is gone too. And then comes the deduction—What, if so, is to become of ME? We have thus a heaven actually, in some true sense, built on hell as a foundation; buttressed on endless misery and sin. And this is received as the true Gospel of JESUS CHRIST. A degrading selfishness is popularised, nay, is sanctified; religion is tainted in its essence; the Cross is degraded. Salvation becomes a sort of stampede for life; a universal *sauve qui peut;* a chase, in which the Powers of evil are always catching the hindmost. And most strange of all, this grotesque and tragic scene is gravely asserted to be the victory of JESUS CHRIST. I do not know whether all this is more strange, or more sad and shocking. For what can be more shocking than that a spiritual being should be for a moment happy in a heaven literally built over the tears, the anguish, the blasphemies of the lost—nay, so long as a solitary mourner sits for ever in hopeless despair? Heaven is likeness to JESUS CHRIST; and likeness to JESUS CHRIST is undying sympathy with the lost; is love unquenchable towards His

worst enemies. But the heaven which the traditional creed (and every modification of it) offers to us is a thing so hardened, so awful, that merely to think of it fills the mind with horror. Deadened sympathies; palsied love; selfishness incarnate; pity withered; such is the heaven too many of the masters of our Israel teach. 'It is a mystery,' they reply. Do they then imagine that we have not wit enough to see that so to answer, where grave moral questions are concerned, is only a confession that no answer is possible?

"Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil, that put light for darkness and darkness for light." Here is the peculiar horror of the traditional creed. In the very Holy of Holies, it places that which revolts and degrades. Its very light is darkness, its tenderness is cruelty. The God it worships bids us love our enemies and do them good; while He consigns to endless perdition His own enemies. Hating sin with an eternal hatred, He provides for it an endless duration, an abiding home. Because it is so very evil, therefore it must go on for ever. This creed calls those acts Love in the Heavenly Father, which it would shrink from as utter vileness in an earthly parent; as though an act, which conscience stamps as cruel and evil in a human being, became good and holy by attributing it to God. Its adherents are content to gaze placidly over the abyss of hell, their satisfaction unbroken;

their joys undimmed, if not actually heightened, by the torments of the lost (p. 50.) And when, finally, the curtain falls on a universe darkened by the horror of eternal sin, they actually call this the triumph of the Cross; and are content to retire into a heaven of ineffable selfishness; not caring though the wail of the lost for ever rise; the husband grown for ever deaf to the appeal of the wife; the mother unheeding the eternal misery of her child. And these horrors are taught at a time like the present, when Agnosticism is more than ever threatening; when Pantheism and Materialism are uniting their forces; when Science looks on the Gospel with hardly disguised scorn. And too often an ignorant, if well meaning, clergy are content to cry, "Have Faith," as though faith were a synonym for folly; as though God were not the author of Reason; as though loyalty to conscience were not the supreme duty of every rational being; and a recognition of its supremacy the very condition by which alone any religion is possible. I am content to bow to the earth before a truth too vast for the human intellect to grasp; content at the bidding of Faith to accept a mystery which transcends my reason; but to prostitute conscience, to dethrone the moral sense, is treason to the Faith itself, it is indeed—"*Propter vitam vivendi perdere causam.*"

Of the selfishness that blackens the ordinary creed I have just spoken. Yet so often is

this overlooked that I press the point again. What shall we say of a system whose very heaven is degradation, whose idea of blessedness is moral baseness or moral torpor? For what does the ordinary view in fact teach? It bids us look forward to a heaven from which our friends, our neighbours, our wives, our brothers, our sisters, are (very many of them) excluded for ever, shut up in agony, while we enjoy the delights of Paradise; we exult, but they agonise; we are in bliss, they are in torment; while we either know not, or knowing, care not for their woe. If this be not selfishness at its height, what is selfishness? If it be not baseness, what is baseness? It is to make the blessed in heaven more degraded morally than DIVES in his torment. To this difficulty, *no answer has ever been given* by the popular creed, except one which makes the difficulty far, far worse, viz., that the blessed delight in contemplating the torments of the lost. It is easy to be shocked at this charge, but it is not easy—nay, it seems impossible to deny that this torment, being the expression of the Divine Will in judgment, must be accepted with perfect satisfaction, and may I not add, pleasure, by God's friends.

A few words I must add on the disregard for truth that taints the ordinary creed. I do not mean wilful untruth, but I do mean that virtual falsehood stains almost the whole body of our religious literature; alike in its gravest and most

elaborate treatises, as in its lighter forms. Falsehood is to say one thing, while meaning another. Hence, to assert that the world is saved, while meaning that in fact half the world will be damned; that mankind is rescued, while meaning in fact that many (or few, it matters not which) go to the Devil eternally: to do this in a thousand forms, in hymns, in sermons, tracts, treatises, is virtual falsehood; and with such falsehood, our religious literature is, I repeat, *literally honey-combed through and through.* In God's name, I say, let this system of equivocation come to an end. One's whole soul is weary of these evasions (however well meant), these thinly disguised sophistries. Let us cease these equivocations, however true it may be that long habit has blinded us to their real nature; cease to speak of CHRIST as saving the world, unless we believe that in fact the world will be saved; cease to talk of the destruction of sin and death, while we really mean that both will, in fact, go on for ever in hell. Let us no more palter with truth in this awful matter; CHRIST is victor, or He is not. He hath put away death and sin and pain in fact, or He has not. If He has only *tried to save* the world and failed, let us, as honest men, say so—as honest men, proclaim as our creed the victory of Satan. But so long as the popular creed and the Bible are held together, so long must this system of untruth continue. We pray to 'our Father,' to whom in the next breath we assign acts towards His own children

more cruel than any the most debased earthly parent ever dreamed of. What is this but to degrade the Godhead below, far below, the level of our humanity? What is left for us to worship if the truth be a lie—if love essential be cruelty itself—if God be that which I dare not write? But there is more to be said. Having thus degraded to the very uttermost the idea of God, the popular creed goes on to assure us of His tenderness that *never* wearies—His love that *never* fails. What cruel mockery is this, coming, as it does, from those who really mean that this unfailing, eternal Love watches to all eternity, unmoved and unsympathising, the never-ending remorse of the lost, the undying evil that for ever preys on God's children. A merchant who has two varying standards, two contradictory measures, is dishonest; but what of the theologian, of whom the same is true, is he less dishonest? It is wrong and cruel to torment a cat or a dog for five minutes, but to be callous to all eternity about the endless misery of a wife or a child, is quite right and good. The transient wrongs of a chimney-sweep excite the sincerest pity; but the eternal anguish of the lost human spirit awakes not even a passing gleam of pity in the Blessed. Let a criminal be tortured for an hour by human law, and all the civilised world is roused; but let the same criminal pass to torture without end, and these endless pangs do not disturb for a moment the raptures of the inhabitants of heaven. Could a perverted ingenuity

discover any system more certain to spread far and wide, nay, to justify, unbelief?

Few things, indeed, illustrate more completely the collapse of the popular creed than the apologies offered for it. Take an instance. A favourite plea with many is to avoid a direct defence, but to take shelter under the phrase, 'God will do His best for every man.' If this ambiguous phrase be offered as a defence for endless sin and torment, I can only suppose it meant not as an argument, but as a grim and ill-timed piece of pleasantry. For what are the admitted facts? An Almighty Being, who is perfectly free to create or to abstain from creating, forces on myriads of hapless children of His own the fatal gift of existence, knowing that in fact this life of theirs will ripen into endless misery and woe. To call this doing His *best* for them is an abuse of language, if it be not what I have ventured to call a cruel and ill-timed pleasantry. To those who so teach I would say, 'Be cruel if you will, be relentless; but do not add to your cruelty, equivocation; to your want of mercy, want of truth and candour.

These are but a few of the reasons which show how impossible it is to reconcile the belief in endless evil, with the plain and unmistakeable convictions of our moral nature — God's highest gift to us. Few things are more wonderful in this whole question than the reluc-

tance so many feel, to follow out these unhesitating convictions to their *only possible* legitimate conclusion—the rejection of that dogma, which so flatly contradicts them. It is not intended for a moment to assert that these convictions are an absolutely infallible guide; for indeed of what can it be said that its directions reach us in an infallible form? Can that be said of the Bible itself? Are those who translate it infallible? Are those who comment on it infallible? Are those who read it free from error, from prejudice, from ignorance? But no Christian, therefore, doubts its Divine authority, or fails to see in it a guide practically sufficient, and binding on us. Exactly so in the case of that other, and primary, revelation of God to the heart and conscience of man. Although we do not claim infallibility for all its conclusions, yet we do claim that the deliberate verdict of our moral sense represents to us the voice of God practically. And, therefore, that which contradicts our deepest moral intuitions, convictions, instincts (call them what you please), *cannot be true.* Nay, by these very convictions, and by these alone, it is that life is ordered, that society subsists, that religion itself becomes possible. Now this being so, we cannot dare, as the popular creed does, to attribute to our Creator acts, which we know and feel would be utterly cruel and horrible in an earthly parent. It is a blasphemy against our Maker so to do; it is doubly a blasphemy against Him who is "our Father."

I say further that the evil wrought by the ordinary creed is enormous. It has done, and is daily doing, more to spread and harden unbelief than all other causes put together. It enlists on the side of scepticism, the highest and best part of our nature, its moral forces. It has turned God into a fiend and a tyrant. It has made of our dear Lord's Cross a bye-word and a mark for scorn : as attempting to save the world and recoiling defeated—the most awful failure known to a history, or conceivable by thought. To a number so vast that I dare not attempt any computation, it has made life an agony and a curse. Nor is this all. I have pointed out how this creed hinders the spread of the Gospel abroad. As the missionary unfolds his tale of horrors, the very heathen shrinks from the mockery of calling such a prospect any part of the glad tidings of great joy.

An important point has been discussed, viz., the attempt made to remove the overwhelming moral difficulties attending the popular creed, by asserting that endless torments are but the result of the human will freely choosing evil ; so that as the phrase is sometimes put, the doors of hell are "locked on the inside." I reply, that, even conceding that a freedom quite unlimited is given to human beings, that this freedom would form no defence whatever for so profound a moral anomaly as GOD'S COMPROMISE WITH EVIL. For how on any moral ground can we possibly

defend God's FREE CREATION of a human will, so weak or so depraved as to choose permanently the service of the Devil, and thus introduce evil eternally, nay, evil in its worst form, *i.e.*, as chosen deliberately? In fact the real difficulties of the popular creed are not *so much as touched* by any such theory of absolute human freedom. The intellectual difficulty remains the same, for the Almighty is thus defeated; the Scriptural difficulty remains the same, for its promises of universal restitution come to naught; and the moral difficulty is untouched, for the final victory remains with the powers of darkness on this view. But further, the term 'free' is wholly ambiguous; it may mean 'absolutely free,' or it may mean 'partially free.' Would it not be better and fairer to tell us in which sense it is employed by the advocates of the traditional dualism? If as meaning 'absolutely free,' I say at once I do not believe a creature can be in strictness 'absolutely free': and at any rate a host of facts (pp. 35-6) prove that absolute freedom has not, in fact, been given to man. And, in addition, revelation affirms that man has been "*shut up unto unbelief*" —words often conveniently ignored. Putting theory aside, we have in every man as a sad fact a will from infancy more or less under the power of sin, a will tending to utter and hopeless servitude to sin. Now what the advocates of so-called freedom ask, is that in the name of liberty this diseased will should be allowed unchecked to

gravitate slowly to perpetual *bondage*—in the name, I repeat, of LIBERTY? A lunatic is to be restrained; a criminal to be imprisoned; an incendiary to be arrested; but the moral criminal, the spiritual incendiary, these are to go freely about their business of ensuring the Devil's victory, and the perpetual slavery to evil of myriads in CHRIST'S redeemed universe; and all this, I repeat, in the name of liberty! And, meantime, God's will is to be set at naught permanently, in order that the Devil's will may be done. A sinner's diseased will is to be so tenderly treated, that it is to be allowed to spread eternal ruin, while God's will to save all men perishes.

Further, let me ask those Churchmen who advocate this unlimited free will, to explain how it is that they on bended knees address God as One who can "order the *unruly wills* of sinful men?" Which, I ask, are we to credit—their prayers or their arguments? And what do they mean by kneeling and saying that God is "able to dispose and govern the hearts of kings as it seemeth best to His godly wisdom?" Do they mean after all that God does not in fact dispose the hearts of men, and that therefore they must go to hell for ever? But let not my readers mistake. It is not enough to expose the contradictions, and equivocations, and sophistries of those whose 'fetich' is 'free will;' and who fancy that by producing it the profoundest moral difficulties disappear. I would add that I am very

far indeed from fatalism. I will yield to no one in advocating a reasonable freedom for man, a true freedom of man's will, I mean freedom enough for, responsibility in the sight of God. Yet all the facts, when fairly viewed, shew us in man not a being wholly free, but a child who is complete, being trained to gain at a future day a perfect freedom. Most certainly, for this training, for moral accountability, a real freedom is needed, and most certainly and awfully man reaps what he sows. Do not, then, let us hear any more of that which passes for argument (but is, indeed, merely claptrap), *i.e.*, the assertion that we reduce man to a mere machine by denying him unlimited freedom. Nor let us forget the plain facts of history. The affinities of the traditional creed have been ever against and not in favour of human freedom. The advocates of freedom are not CALVIN, not LUTHER, not AUGUSTINE, but CLEMENT and ORIGEN, and GREGORY of Nyssa, and men like minded.

In the present edition I have taken great pains with the historical side of this question. It has been, I trust, abundantly shewn that from the very earliest days the larger hope was freely taught as in perfect harmony with the Catholic Faith, and that such teaching has never been condemned by the Church; points which I earnestly commend to my readers' attention.

Next we have seen (ch. vi.) how close is the

connection between Universalism and Creation, Incarnation, Atonement, and Resurrection ; and have enquired carefully into the meaning of certain doctrines, viz. : God's 'Election of the few,' of 'Death,' of 'Judgment,' of 'Fire,' of 'the Ages.' I have attempted to show that the true teaching of Holy Scripture, and of antiquity, on all these points is in absolute harmony with the larger hope ; that to insist on one and all is but to bring into clearer relief the doctrine of universal salvation.

We next turned to consider the all-important question of the teaching of Holy Scripture. I have pointed out how, even in the Old Testament, there are intimations from the very first of a future blessing, designed to embrace all the race of man. These intimations become more and more distinct as the plan of God is more fully disclosed, and both Psalmists and Prophets unite in their promises of a golden age yet to come, when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. The New Testament received more minute attention, due to its supreme importance. The passages —at least all the more important ones—supposed generally to teach the popular creed, have been carefully considered, and we have seen reason to conclude that they, one and all, while emphatically warning sinners of the wrath to come, teach nowhere an *endless* punishment, nowhere an unending hell.

A long chapter has been devoted to a series of notes, designedly brief and simple, pointing out how full the New Testament is of passages (alas, neglected or explained away), and yet distinctly teaching or implying the final salvation of all men. So deeply important is this evidence furnished by the New Testament in favour of a universal salvation, that I venture here to append a brief summary of the passages already quoted. We have seen how to CHRIST is assigned a kingdom absolutely without bound or limit; how *all* flesh shall see the salvation He gives. You have read how the leaven of His Kingdom must work on until the *whole* is leavened; and the Good Shepherd seek on, till each sheep He has lost is found. You have read how the Son of Man came to seek and to save, not some of the lost, but simply "that which was lost," *i.e.*, simply "the lost." His mission is again described as having for its object the salvation of the world, and He is said *to take away* the sin of the whole world. Do these terms fairly represent a partial salvation; are they honestly consistent with it? Again, it is said that *all things* have been given to the Son, and that all that is so given shall come to Him. He is repeatedly described as the Saviour of the world—which yet He does not in fact save on the popular view—as the Light of the world. He is said not to offer, but to *give* life to the world; a totally different thing. He says (no words can be more absolute), speaking of His Cross, that He will draw *all* men unto

Himself. He adds, that He came not to judge, but to save the world. All these passages are familiar: true, but can you possibly, on any fair theory of the meaning of human language, reconcile them with the horrors of endless sin, or with a partial salvation? If the sin of the *whole world be taken away*, how shall there be a hell for its endless punishment? If *all* things without exception (the original is the widest possible) are given to CHRIST, and all so given to Him shall come to Him, can you reconcile this with unending misery? But let us go on: we find language over and over again employed by the Evangelists quite as strong and as decisive against the popular creed as that just quoted. When, for instance, we read in *S. John* how God's Son was manifested for the very purpose of *destroying the works of the Devil*, we are forced to enquire if that is consistent by any possibility with preserving these works in hell for ever? Is there no significance in CHRIST'S telling us that He is "alive unto the ages, and has the *keys* of hell and death?" Or again, what does the promise to make *all* things new mean? If this be not a promise of universal restoration, what is it? Again, remember the promise that there shall be no more curse, and *no more pain.* Lastly, ponder over the glorious vision of the *Apocalypse*, where *every creature* in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, is described as joining in the song of praise to God and to the Lamb; and ask yourself if less than a universal salvation

can possibly satisfy the plain sense of these words of Scripture.

It is bad enough for the traditional creed to evade the force of such words ; but, having done so, to turn round and charge universalism with being afraid to appeal to Scripture is something far worse. We have next to consider a very large body of fresh passages, quite as distinctly teaching the larger hope, furnished by the Epistles of S. PAUL, S. PETER, and that to the *Hebrews*. S. PAUL'S Epistles especially are full of the most glowing anticipations of the universal reign of CHRIST, and the assured triumph of His Kingdom over all evil and sin. Thus ABRAHAM is to receive the world, and no less, as His portion, *i.e.*, in God's elect seed all are to be saved. Whatever the Fall has done to injure man is to be repaired, and much more than repaired, by the gift of God's grace in CHRIST. But is it possible *to undo, in fact, all that sin has done if a single soul* be left in endless loss?* would not S. PAUL be in fact speaking *untruly* in such a case ? I submit that a fair answer is due to this enquiry (even though a fair answer leads to universalism). Further, the same Apostle assures us that the *whole creation* shall be

* "If but one soul were to remain in the power of the Devil, death, or hell, to all endless eternity, . . then the Devil, death, and hell would have something to boast of against God ; . . and thus death would not be entirely swallowed up in victory, but always keep something of his sting, and hell would ever more be able to make a scorn of those who would say, 'O hell, where is thy victory?'"—*The Everlasting Gospel—Paul Siegvolck*, 1753.

delivered into the glorious liberty of God's children. And, again, he argues that the very fact of God's giving His Son proves that with Him all things are given—the original word is the widest possible, and certainly includes all souls. Again, *all* Israel are to be saved (and Israel's salvation is that of the entire world). The Apostle, too, affirms that God's gifts and calling are 'without repentance' (irrevocable)—words significant in the highest degree, for what is the popular creed but an emphatic assertion that God's gifts can be set at naught? And what S. PAUL here asserts is echoed in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, which assures us of the immutability of God's counsel. Again, has God shut up *all* in unbelief: it is, S. PAUL says, that He may have mercy upon *all*. Does '*all*' mean '*some*' in the latter clause, and not in the former here?

Once more, the same Apostle assures us that if the first ADAM brings death universally, then the second ADAM is to bring universal life. If sin abounds, *much more* shall grace abound. Weigh these words well, for in saying that the second ADAM has in fact failed in myriads of cases to undo the evil caused by the Fall, you are giving these words of Scripture the flattest contradiction that it is possible to give. Then as to CHRIST'S empire, the Apostle says it must extend universally, that to Him *every* knee shall bow—"All creation, all things, *whatsoever* and *wheresoever they be.*"—*Lightfoot on Phil.* ii. 10

—and *every* tongue confess; that one day—at the End—God shall be *all in all.* In fact S. PAUL never seems to weary of claiming this universal dominion for CHRIST. It is the Father's good pleasure to sum up all things in CHRIST; to reconcile all things unto Himself through CHRIST—so S. PAUL assures us. Do our friends really ask reasonable enquirers to believe that anything can be reconciled to God by being consigned to hopeless evil? Nor is it any better than a manifest evasion to say that all things are reconciled to God, if after countless generations have sent their contingents to the Devil for ever, some one generation, finally, shall be absolutely and fully saved. Further, the Apostle assures us that the living God is the Saviour of *all*, that JESUS CHRIST has *abolished death*, that the grace of God bringeth salvation to *all* men. Are these statements fairly consistent with a partial salvation?*

S. PETER, too, speaks to the same effect. He tells the wonderful story of CHRIST preaching *to the dead*, who had once been disobedient and were apparently *lost*—a story whose significance is the very greatest possible, as indicating how behind the veil CHRIST works on to heal and to save: and in his second Epistle adds, that the

*Further it is impossible for any thoughtful reader to escape noting how, at times, this Apostle seems on fire, as it were; as he catches sight of a vision of surpassing glory, of a future kingdom to be won by CHRIST; boundless, limitless, embracing every created thing, whatsoever and wheresoever.

Lord is not willing that *any* should perish. Is God's deliberate counsel—such is the original word—to come to nothing? Then in the Epistle to the *Hebrews* we have some remarkable testimony to the same effect. Thus we have there repeated the assertion that *all* things are to be put under CHRIST; that His object in dying was to destroy the Devil; that once in the end of the age He has appeared to put away, *i.e.*, *abolish sin* by His sacrifice of Himself. Do say how the abolition of sin is or can be consistent with maintaining evil in hell for ever? Finally, let me remind you how precise and emphatic the promise is (see *Hebrews* viii. 10-1), that one day *all* shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest. Thus, the traditional creed stands opposed—hopelessly opposed—to the plainest teaching of the word of God; nay, it may be said virtually to deny God Himself, because if we are to believe in God at all, there is no room for a *defeated* God. Therefore, either God really wills to save all men in fact, and if so, He will assuredly accomplish this; or He does not so will. The first proposition involves the larger hope. The second is mere Calvinism.* I can see no rational alternative.

Such is a very brief outline of the teaching of Scripture, for I have not by any means cited here all its promises of universal salvation. It is no

*And thus, since Calvinism has fallen into universal discredit, there has been a steady movement towards the larger hope on all sides.

case of isolated texts. It is no case of building upon Eastern metaphors, of dogma resting upon misconceptions of the original. It is quite the contrary. It is evidence, clear and unambiguous, and not this alone, but repeated over and over again, as we have seen. We have, in fact, line upon line, promise upon promise, assertions—varied, reiterated, accumulated—yet amid all their variety, pointing with one consent to this great central thought, to the completeness of the triumph of JESUS CHRIST, to the boundless nature of His empire over all souls; to the assurance of a victory—infinite and absolute—won by His Incarnation, His Death, and His Resurrection over all the powers of evil. In the words of our ablest living commentator, "The Father willed through CHRIST to reconcile the universe once more unto Himself, . . and so to restore all things *whatsoever* and *wheresoever they be.*"

This being so, let me next ask, have you, who maintain the traditional creed, ever quietly thought over the terrible slight you offer to the whole work of CHRIST, to His Incarnation and His Passion, by asserting the final loss of countless myriads of our race? He has come, we know, to save the world. He, the Almighty One; very God of very God: but you are never tired of proclaiming in all your writings, in all your pulpits, His defeat. His Apostles announce, in language strong and clear, in words that still

burn and throb with life, His victory over death. You announce death's victory over Him, for hell filled to all eternity with its wailing millions is His defeat, nay, His utter defeat. Could you more effectually make light of His Atonement? Could you, in fact, more truly pour scorn on His Cross and Passion? I read in His Word that in His death all (actually) died (so vital, so close is the union between Him and all the race of man). Are they, then, to go down to endless pains, those lost ones *who died with Jesus*—(2 *Cor.* v. 14, *Rev. Ver.*)—these souls of His creating, of His redeeming, still wet, so to speak, with His most precious blood, still pursued by His love (for love is unfailing); are these souls to spend an eternity in sin and pain? Am I to proclaim this as the victory of JESUS CHRIST; this as the glad tidings of great joy? I do not for a moment impugn the honesty of my opponents; but it is something more than strange to see thoughtful men teaching that CHRIST 'sees of the travail of His soul and is SATISFIED,' while He surveys to all eternity even one immortal spirit for whom He died—one child of His Love in the grip of the Devil for ever.

Permit me further—for I want again to protest against the dishonour done to God's word by the popular creed—permit me before I leave this solemn subject, to ask what the meaning is, on the popular view, of the oft-repeated promises of the New Testament assigning to CHRIST a universal

empire? What do they mean, if they do not really mean that to CHRIST'S kingdom there shall one day be actually no limit? IS IT TRUE, in the natural acceptance of the words, that in CHRIST *all things*, *Eph.* i. 10—the original words are the widest possible—are to be summed up. Is it true that CHRIST has actually abolished death; that He has been manifested for this very end, that He might destroy *all* the works of the Devil? Or is it a mere dream of the Evangelist, when He tells us that God has given to Him all things, and that all things that the Father hath given to Him shall come to Him? But if all this, and far, far more than this, is actually written in Holy Scripture, how can it be truly taught that sin and hell are *endless?* Can sin be everlasting, and yet the sins of the world be truly taken away by the Lamb of God? Can hell for ever prey on the countless tribes of the lost, and yet the whole creation be delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God? Once again, let me say that a fair answer is due to these questions, and not an answer which is, in fact, an evasion.

Reflect and see what it is the popular creed is, in fact, teaching—see its manifold inconsistencies—the utter contradictions of Scripture, to which long usage and tradition has deadened its supporters. What does it teach? CHRIST "holding the keys of hell" and never opening; CHRIST "making all things new," and yet things and persons

innumerable not renewed; the Good Shepherd "seeking till He finds," and yet never finding; "no more pain," and yet pain for evermore; "no more curse," and yet hell echoing for ever with the curses of the lost; "tears wiped from every eye," and yet the lost for ever weeping; every creature which is in "heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are on the sea, and all that are in them, saying blessing and glory and honour to God," and yet an infinite number of creatures shut up for ever and ever in misery; "all made alive in CHRIST," and yet myriads sunk in hopeless, endless death.

Finally, what remains to say? It remains only that I plead for the acceptance of the larger hope, as taught and believed by so many in primitive days (which I may claim to have fully proved by ample quotations); a hope, and a firm faith that it has ever been the purpose of 'Our Father' to save all His human children. To believe less than this would be, not alone to contradict the plain and repeated teachings of Holy Scripture, as I have tried to show, but to mistake its whole scope and purpose. For what is the Bible? it is the story of a Restoration, wider, deeper, mightier than the Fall, and therefore bringing to every child of Adam healing and salvation. It is not, as the popular creed teaches, the self-contradictory story of One Almighty to save, and yet not, in fact, saving those for whom He

died. It is the story of infinite Love seeking "till it find;" a Love that never faileth, *never*, though heaven and earth pass away; a Love that is, from its very nature, INEXTINGUISHABLE—being the Love of a divine Father. It is the story of the unchanging purpose of the unchanging God.

Further, by this larger hope, and by it alone, can we accept and harmonize every line and letter of Holy Scripture, its solemn threatenings to the sinner, no less than its repeated promises of life to all. These threatenings I accept implicitly. They are, as we have seen, fully reconciled with the promises of universal salvation the moment we have learned to realize the true meaning of God's judgments and penalties, and led by His word to see in 'the ages' yet to come His purposes being steadily worked out. Yes, I believe, because the New Testament so teaches, and all reason confirms it, that to this brief life there succeed many ages, and that "through these ages an increasing purpose runs." In these 'ages' and during their progress it is that God's threatenings find their complete fulfilment for the ungodly; and the many successive scenes of the drama of redemption are slowly unfolded, and carried to completion. For God's purpose to save all men once declared must stand firm for ever from His very nature; and to this end it is that His very penalties are inflicted, that in JESUS CHRIST, one day, all created things may be summed up. And this

being so, we who hold the larger hope are prepared fully to believe that there await the sinner in 'the ages' yet to come, God's fiery judgments; that æonian discipline protracted till the will of man yield to the will of "our Father," and till, as in the silent prophecy of the familiar words, "that will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

For this I plead, for a hope, wide as that which swelled the Saviour's heart, when looking steadily at the Cross He said "I, if I be lifted up will draw all men unto Me." I plead for the simple truthfulness of the explicit promise made by all God's Holy prophets, "that there shall be a restitution of all things."—*Acts* iii. 21. The issue may be simply stated, *is this promise true* in its fair and natural meaning, or *is it untrue?* The dilemma cannot be avoided—*yes* or *no?*

For my part, in this promise I believe—in the true catholicity of the Church of CHRIST, as destined to embrace all mankind—in the power of His redemption, as something which no will can resist, to which all things must yield one day in perfect submission, love and harmony. I plead for the acceptance of this great central truth, that the victory of JESUS CHRIST must be final, absolute and complete—that nothing can impair the power of His Cross and Passion to save the human race. I believe that He shall see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied. And I feel assured that less than a world saved, a universe

restored, could not satisfy the heart of JESUS CHRIST, or the love of our Father. I ask all fair and reasonable minds to reject, as immoral, and incredible, the picture of a heavenly Parent, who, being absolutely free and absolute in power and goodness, creates any children of His own, whom He knows to be, in fact, certain to go to endless sin and ruin. Therefore in these pages I have pleaded for the larger hope. Therefore I believe in the vision, glorious beyond all power of human thought fully to realise, of a 'Paradise regained,' of a universe from which every stain of sin shall have been swept away, in which every heart shall be full of blessedness, in which "God shall be All and in All."—*Amen.*

THE END.

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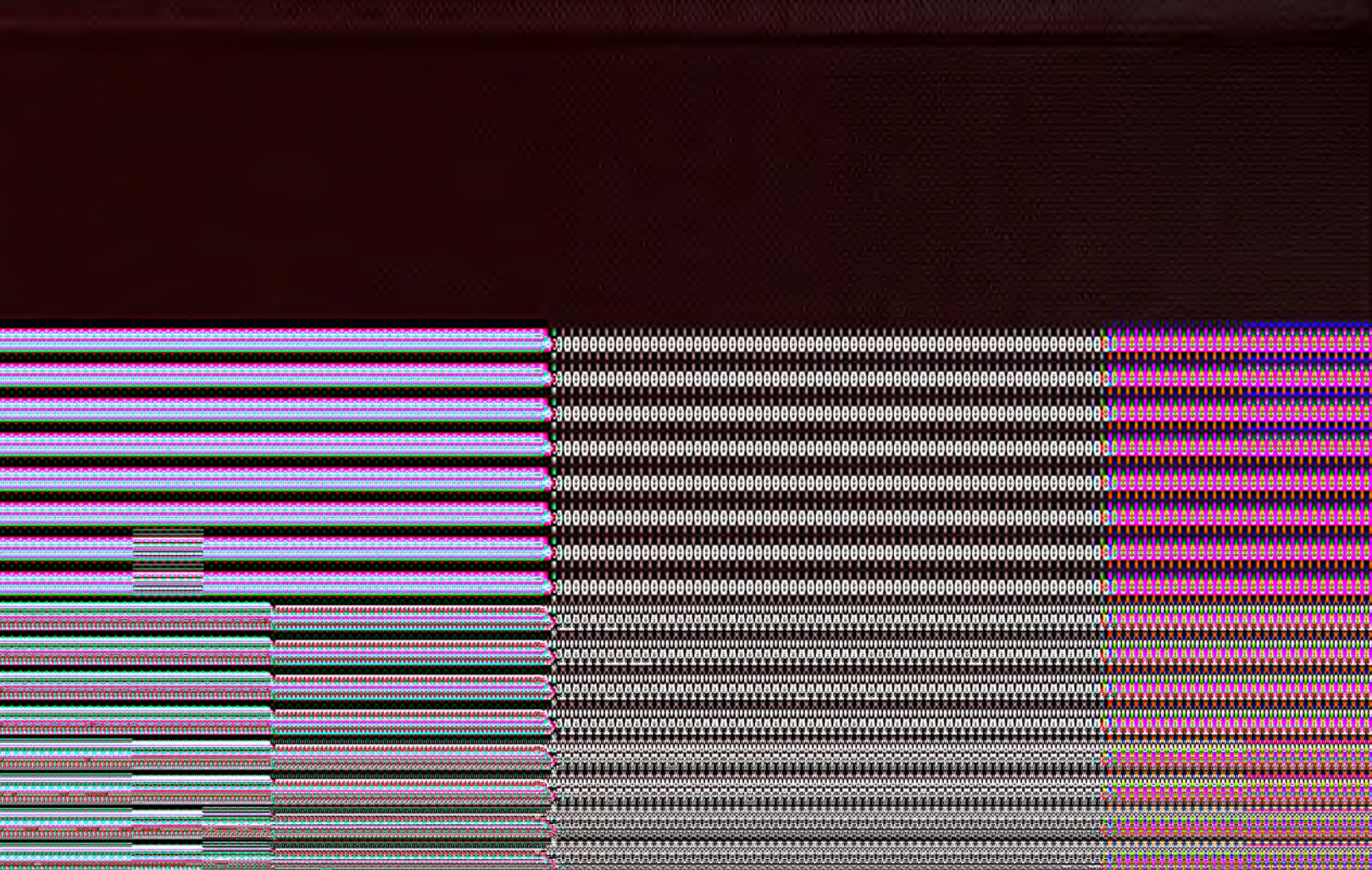
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